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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

~~THE~~ HISTORY OF WINTHROP,  
MASSACHUSETTS

by

Edward Rowe Snow

(S. B., Harvard College, 1932)

submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

1939





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INTERVIEWS WITH THE FOLLOWING WINTHROP RESIDENTS

Porter Tewksbury

Amanda Floyd

Channing Howard

Wallace Wyman

Captain Bert Wyman

Mollie Haggerston Lougee

William Gray (deceased)

George Robie (deceased)

William Ham

Mrs. John Flanagan

Earl Beddoes

Ann Morgan

Mrs. John White

INTERVIEWS WITH THE FOLLOWING WINTERBORE RESIDENTS

Porter Tomkewich

Amos Pigg

Charles Howard

Wallace Green

Captain Bert Wynn

Helie Haggensen Jones

William Gray (deceased)

George Noble (deceased)

William Ren

Mrs. John Elmer

Earl Hedden

Ann Morgan

Mrs. John White



## THE HISTORY OF WINTHROP

Edward Rowe Snow

### INTRODUCTION

As the visitor to America looks westward while the ship, on which he sails, passes Graves Light in Outer Boston Harbor, he sees, outlined against the sky, a high promontory where stands the silver-gray silhouette of Winthrop's most dominating landmark, the water tower. It cannot be determined how many years have elapsed since the first white man viewed this Cottage Hill drumlin, but it is well over three hundred.

It is even possible that the Norsemen saw Great Head around 1003 A. D. Other travelers who undoubtedly noticed the Winthrop promontory include Giovanni Verrazano, Bartholomew Gosnold, John Smith, and Myles Standish.<sup>1</sup>

The contours of the Winthrop area have changed but little since the first red man visited its shores. It is a queerly shaped peninsula, joining the mainland at Beachmont and having an area of slightly more than 900 acres.

Except for this small strip of beachland (fifty yards wide) connecting the town to the rest of the North Shore, Winthrop is surrounded by water. The broad Atlantic beats against

1. It seems definitely settled that Madoc of Wales, son of Owen Gwynneth, never visited this section. Neither did the Zeno brothers.





its beaches on the East, the usually placid waters of the harbor caress its western shores, and Belle Isle Inlet separates Winthrop from Orient Heights to the northwest.

There are three hills in Winthrop of enough prominence to mention. The area known as the Highlands is really a double hill, rising at its highest point to a level 82 feet above the sea. At the other end of the town, Point Shirley Hill once stood 55 feet high, but twelve feet were removed from its summit in 1907.

Cottage Hill, sometimes called Great Head or Green Hill, is the highest promontory in town. It rises to a height of 105 feet<sup>2</sup> above the surf which pounds below it, and is the favorite lookout for residents of the town.

2. U. S. Coastal Chart number 246

3. Records of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. 1, P. 101, 118, 126.





PART I, 1615 - 1753

Winthrop has had many names and titles during its existence. Pullen Point, Rumney Marsh, Winissimett, Chelsea, Point Shirley, and North Chelsea, at one time or other, have all included the area we now call Winthrop. In September, 1634, it was agreed that Winissimett should become part of Boston with provision that the town should "have enlargement att Mount Wolotson and Rumney Marshe".<sup>3</sup>

The earliest known inhabitants of Winthrop were the Indians, called the Rumney Marsh Indians, in reality a branch of the Pawtucket Indians, part of the great tribe of Aberginians. Two events had served to cut down the activity of the red men to an almost negligible quantity by the time the white men arrived.

The first event was the great war with the Taratine Indians, who overwhelmed the Pawtuckets and killed a large percentage of their population in 1615. The second disaster was the great plague of smallpox, which harried the Indians the very next year, 1616.

The Indian chieftain of the section including Winthrop was Nanapashemet. Although he survived both the war and the epidemic, his enemies killed him in 1619. After his death the Indians seem to have withdrawn from the peninsula and to have settled around what is now Revere.

3. Records of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. 1, P. 101, 119, 125.



PART I. 1615 - 1755

Wintrop has had many names and titles during its existence. Pullen Point, Runney Marsh, Wimsissett, Chelsea, Point Shirley, and North Chelsea, at one time or other, have all included the area we now call Wintrop. In September, 1634, it was agreed that Wimsissett should become part of Boston with provision that the town should "have enlargement at Mount Wolfson and Runney Marsh".<sup>3</sup>

The earliest known inhabitants of Wintrop were the Indians, called the Runney Marsh Indians, in reality a branch of the Pawtucket Indians, part of the great tribe of Abenigians. Two events had served to cut down the activity of the red men to an almost negligible quantity by the time the white men arrived.

The first event was the great war with the Teraetne Indians, who overwhelmed the Pawtuckets and killed a large percentage of their population in 1615. The second disaster was the great plague of smallpox, which harried the Indians the very next year, 1616.

The Indian chieftain of the section including Wintrop was Wanasashamet. Although he survived both the war and the epidemic, his enemies killed him in 1619. After his death the Indians seem to have withdrawn from the peninsula and to have settled around what is now Haver.

3. Records of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. I, p. 101, 119, 125.



A few years later the first white settler of this area arrived. He was Samuel Maverick. Building a residence on what is now Marine Hospital Hill in Chelsea, he fortified it in time to repulse the Indian attack of 1625. The red men never bothered him again.

Five years later, June 17, 1630, Samuel Maverick received John Winthrop and the Puritans at his palisaded home in Chelsea. Maverick is believed to have been the son of Reverend John Maverick of Dorchester, and had probably arrived in America with Gorges.<sup>4</sup>

An explanation as to the reason for the settlement of the Winthrop area would be fitting at this time. In December, 1634, Boston granted lands within its limits to several of its inhabitants, including John Winthrop, Coddington, Bellingham, Cotton, and Oliver, allowing them to divide and dispose of all lands not yet in the lawful possession of any person. We know that the poorer people of the Puritans were given lands near Muddy River in Brookline but the wealthy inhabitants who had servants to till the soil were allowed larger tracts of land at Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point, across the bay from Boston, with either servants or farmers tilling the soil or

4. Although Palfrey claims that Jeffrey and Burslem probably had houses at Winnisimmet in 1626, Charles Francis Adams conclusively shows that they were at Wessagusset. Who then, represented Winnisimmet in the Morton incident of June 1628? As regards the arrival of Maverick in America, perhaps he was with Christopher Levett, who landed at Pica-tqua sometime before the summer of 1624.







grazing the cattle for their landlords.

There are just a few of the other early settlers who can be connected in any way with Winthrop. William Noddle, after whom Noddle's Island in Boston Harbor was named, undoubtedly trampled up and down the shores of Winthrop many times before his sudden death in 1632.

One day, when he started a trip in his canoe with a great load of wood, the canoe overturned and William Noddle was drowned.<sup>5</sup> We know nothing of his genealogical relationships.

The next important settler was Job Perkins, who in 1632 was allowed the areas of Pullen Point and Noddle's Island on which to exercise his exclusive privilege of catching fowl with nets.<sup>6</sup> Three years later Perkins moved to Ipswich, becoming deputy at Boston from there in 1636.

The General Court appointed William Cheesborough to take care of the cattle in the Pullen Point palisade February 23, 1635. Probably he was the first resident of Winthrop who lingered any length of time. He moved away to Stoughton, Connecticut, three years later.<sup>7</sup>

Edward Gibbons moved to Winthrop around 1640. A colorful and romantic figure, he caused much trouble in the

5. John Winthrop, History of New England from 1630 to 1649, Vol. I. P. 83

6. Records of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. 1, P. 94

7. Records of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. I, P. 101



During the middle of their landings.

There are just a few of the other early residents who

can be connected in any way with Whitrop. William Hobbs,

after whom Hobbs Island in Boston Harbor was named, was

only transplanted up and down the shores of Whitrop many times

before his sudden death in 1837.

One day, when he started a wife in his canoe with a

great load of wood, the canoe overturned and William Hobbs

was drowned. We know nothing of the genealogical relationship

The next important settler was John Perkins, who in

1832 was allowed the lease of Pullen Point and Hobbs Island

on which to exercise his exclusive privilege of catching lobst-

er with nets. Three years later Perkins moved to Ipswich, be-

coming master of the boat from there in 1836.

The General Court appointed William Chesbrough to

the care of the wharves in the Pullen Point peninsula February

27, 1837. Probably he was the first resident of Whitrop who

improved any length of time. He moved away to Uxbridge,

Connecticut, three years later.

Edward Gibson moved to Whitrop around 1840.

Colonel and Francis Gibson, he caused much trouble in the

2. John Whitrop, history of New England from 1630 to 1810,

Vol. I, p. 23

3. Records of the General Court, Vol. I, p. 104

4. Records of the General Court, Vol. I, p. 101





MAP OF WINTHROP AS OF JANUARY 1939







early days of the Puritan Colony. We first hear from him at Mount Wollaston with Thomas Morton and his riotous followers. He then became intoxicated on board the Friendship, running the vessel ashore on Governor's Island, and was fined twenty shillings for his indiscretion.<sup>8</sup>

On February 17, 1641 Gibbons and his wife achieved everlasting fame by riding from their Winthrop residence right across the ice to Boston in their sleigh.<sup>9</sup>

Two and a half years later, Mrs. Gibbons was rowing her children near Governor's Island when she was hailed by the notorious Frenchman LaTour,<sup>10</sup> who had sailed into the harbor, anxious for information about Boston. Frightened, she landed her craft on Governor's Island where John Winthrop was then living.<sup>11</sup> Winthrop soon arranged matters to the satisfaction of every one, and Mrs. Gibbons reached Pullen Point in safety.<sup>12</sup>

We shall now take up the Winthrop family in some detail. The General Court, on November 6, 1637, gave John Winthrop the "twoe hills next Pullen Point <sup>13</sup> provided it be no hindrance of the towne settling up a ware in Fisher's Creek, or of fishing for basse there".<sup>14</sup>

8. Gibbons became the second commander of Castle Island.
9. John Winthrop, History of New England, Vol. I, P. 113.
10. LaTour had been fighting with his enemy D'Aulnay for the possession of Acadia.
11. The alleged cellar hole of Winthrop's house has been tentatively identified by William Sumner Appleton of the S. P. N. E. A.
12. John Winthrop, History of New England, Vol. II, P. 106.
13. Known today as Cottage Hill and the Highlands.
14. The Great Allotments were recorded on January 8, 1638.



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Two and a half years later, Mrs. Gibbons was rowing her children near Governor's Island when she was killed by the notorious Frenchman Latour.<sup>10</sup> Her death was followed by her anxious relatives' apprehensions. It was feared she had found her craft on Governor's Island where John Wintrop was then living. Wintrop soon arranged matters to the satisfaction of every one, and Mrs. Gibbons reached Pullen Point in safety.<sup>11</sup>

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12. John Wintrop, History of New England, Vol. II, p. 106.
13. Known today as Cottage Hill and the Highlands.
14. The Great Allotments were recorded on January 8, 1638.



Famous for the great number of trans-Atlantic trips in his day, William Pierce had built a residence in Winthrop around 1637. Coming to New England with Cotton and Hooker, on January 29, 1638, he was allotted 100 acres of land in Pullen Point. Deane Winthrop purchased the house and land from William Pierce on December 6, 1649, and became Winthrop's largest landholder. His father, John Winthrop, had died some months previously. Thus, at the age of 25, Deane Winthrop became one of the outstanding men of the community.

Deane Winthrop had left England for America aboard the Abigail, under Captain Richard Hackwell July 10, 1635. A letter which Deane wrote his brother John has been preserved. Dated March 1, 1648,<sup>15</sup> the letter mentions a gun which John sent him from his colony at the mouth of the Connecticut River. Deane goes on to say that the "pinnis that should have brought it did not return backe againe". Deane purchased another gun, however, and was able to rid the land of the wolves which bothered his cattle.

Fourteen years passed, Deane Winthrop married the stepdaughter of President Dunster of Harvard College, and the couple had nine children in all. Perhaps Deane, through the years, had grown dissatisfied with his position in the community. On December 16, 1662, he was anxious to move. He had "some thoughts of remouing from the place thet I now liue in into your coloni<sup>16</sup> if I could lit of a convanent place. The

15. The original of this letter is at the Winthrop Public Library.

16. John Winthrop, Jr. had removed to Connecticut in 1635.



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pleace that I now liue in is litel for me, --mi children now groweing up".

One of the earliest known shipwrecks off the Winthrop shore which occurred in 1682 concerns Deane Winthrop. On November 28, 1682,<sup>17</sup> Captain Horton's ship from Nevis entered Boston Harbor during a driving snowstorm and crashed on the Winthrop Beach. A cargo of silver was washed overboard, and three sailors were drowned. Ten men made their way to shore and started for the Deane Winthrop residence. Four froze to death before they could reach the residence, but the remaining six attained their goal, and were received by the Winthrop household.

By this time the old Indian trails were no longer adequate for the visitors to Pullen Point, and plans were made for improving travel conditions.

After considerable waiting, on April 30, 1666<sup>18</sup> the General Court chose John Tuttle, William Hasey, and Samuel Davis to plan the highway from Rumney Marsh to Pullen Point, but no documents have been found to indicate just what they accomplished. Incidentally, Tuttle had been accepted into that select group of people known as freemen the year before.

Captain Edward Gibbons, the soldier, rose to be major general of the Colonial troops by 1650, but died in 1654. At

17. Massachusetts Historical Society, Collections -

"Diary of Samuel Sewall", Vol. II, P. 19.

18. Boston Record Commissioners' Report, Vol. VII, P. 31.





the time of his death he owned land at Hog Island, as well as Winthrop. In 1657, this property was purchased by James Bill.

Without question, this Pullen Point resident, James Bill, has more living descendants in Winthrop than any other colonist.<sup>19</sup> Before 1645 he had purchased land from Wentworth Days. Born in England in 1615, he had probably moved to Winthrop about 1635. By 1650 he was living in Captain Gibbons' old residence. It is believed that when his sons grew up they moved over to the Bill House, formerly located on Beal Street.<sup>20</sup>

On the 19th of December, 1686, the frigate Kingfisher sailed past Pullen Point on its way to Boston, bearing Sir Edmund Andros, the new governor of New England. Historians differ as to his proper position in history, but Andros proceeded to impose taxes and imposts which showed the colonists that the days of lenient governors were over.

Andros took over the Old South Meeting House for his Episcopalian services, and in many ways turned the population against him. While Andros was absent in Hartford, plans were probably made back in Boston for a united opposition to his rule, and it was arranged that Increase Mather be sent to England in protest.

In April 1688, Mather made ready for his trip on the President, but Andros directed that the ship be sent away ahead

19. A tablet on the wall of the Winthrop Town Hall commemorates James Bill.

20. In 1927, in spite of much opposition, the residence of the Bill family was torn down.







of time. Mather, not to be outdone, made private plans to reach the ship, which anchored near Deer Island, and after a circuitous journey by land to Winthrop, Mather rowed out from Pullen Point through Shirley Gut and reached the ship.

Many believe today that Andros has been severely handled by the historians of America. The case of John Pittom should be considered in any survey of Andros' personality. Pittom, a resident of Deer Island, was set adrift in a boat with his family in 1688 because he refused to pay taxes on the land. High Sheriff Sherlock stationed two of his constables on Deer Island to see that Pittom did not return.

Incidents such as the Pittom affair were taking place all over Boston. Even the substantial bulk of Samuel Sewall was not free from the Andros shadow, with Sewall receiving notice to pay a tax for his Hog Island property. The Andros revolution intervened, however.

When news arrived in Boston that King James II had fallen and that William of Orange was on the throne, plans were quickly completed for a revolution against Andros.

On April 18, 1689, New England's first revolution of consequence began.<sup>21</sup> Andros was captured, along with his deputies, and locked up in the Town House, after the declaration of disapproval had been read to him. Andros was later taken

21. On the 250th anniversary of this event a tablet was erected at the scene of the revolution, April 18, 1939.







over to Castle Island, where he was confined in a dungeon for the next ten months.

After a few attempts to escape had failed, Andros wrote to England asking to be released, and the next year reached his home across the water. His next position was as Governor of Virginia, where he helped to establish the college of William and Mary.<sup>22</sup>

Back at Pullen Point, Deane Winthrop watched his family grow up, and spent much time worrying. He had completed his last service to the community by surveying the road from Pullen Point to Winissimet, in the spring of 1699.<sup>23</sup> In July of the same year, his daughter Mercy was married to Atherton Haugh. Samuel Sewall was present, and records the incident in his diary.<sup>24</sup>

Sewall mentions the death of Deane Winthrop, March 16, 1704, "Mr. Deane Winthrop dies upon his Birthday. 81 Years old. He is the last of Gov. Winthrop's children".<sup>25</sup>

The three sons of James Bill received their father's estate in 1688. James Junior was given the land from Cottage Park along what is now Washington Avenue to Fisher's Creek. Bill's other two sons, Jonathan and Joseph, had equal shares of the remainder. When Captain Edward Hutchinson died, James, Jonathan, and Joseph Bill received equal shares of his land

22. Andros was appointed to Virginia in 1692, where he ruled for 6 years. He died in 1714.

23. Boston Record Commissioners' Report, Vol. VII, P. 233.

24. M. H. S. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. I, P. 499.

25. M. H. S. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. II, P. 96.







in Winthrop, including Apple Island. The holdings of property by various individuals is skillfully handled by Mr. William Johnson on his plan of October 21, 1690. The last known change in the affairs of the Bill family in this chapter occurred on February 1, 1709, when Elizabeth Reynolds, a widow, conveyed the six acres of land in the Cottage Park section to Joshua, grandson of James, and son of Jonathan.

Joshua kept the property for six weeks, soon selling it to his uncle Joseph for a profit of about 4 pounds on his original investment of 23 pounds.<sup>26</sup>

In the spring of 1714 Joshua Bill's two sons, Jonathan and Joshua, Junior, were caught hunting and shooting foxes on the Lord's Day. Jonathan paid the costs in court, and the two men were released. The Bill family probably used caution and deliberation in later years if they felt the necessity for hunting on the Sabbath.

The section now known as Winthrop has been inhabited for many score years, during which time hundreds of fishing trips have been made from Pullen Point. The first fishing expedition on record began on the morning of July 17, 1705. The oft-mentioned diarist, Samuel Sewall, headed this early morning trip from what is now Winthrop Beach, and fishing luck was equal to that of some modern fishermen. Anchoring between the

26. Joshua was the school teacher for Pullen Point, 1749.





Graves and Nahant, the group caught only three codfish. Sewall's captain on the trip was old Captain Bonner, father of the John Bonner who drew the famous map of Boston.<sup>27</sup>

Conditions in Europe were now so serious that the residents of New England feared a French invasion from Canada. In answer to frantic appeals, the British ministry promised five regiments of Marlborough's army to be sent to Boston. The people of Pullen Point looked over from Great Head and saw immense barracks being raised three miles away on Camp Hill, while Pemberton's island four miles to the south was being prepared for the sick soldiers of England's finest troops. Month after month went by, but the soldiers never came. Then word arrived that the five regiments had been diverted to Portugal.

A year passed, when one day an observer on Pullen Point Head saw many sails far at sea. The people were quite worried before they identified the ships as English men-of-war and realized the long awaited armada of Sir Hovendon Walker was actually in sight. Ship after ship slid in between Deer Island and Nix's Mate,<sup>28</sup> until the harbor was crowded with spars and masts. Marlborough's regiments had arrived. As the anchors from Sir Hovendon Walker's flagship slid into the water the people from Rumney Marsh, Winissimett and Pullen Point realized that this fleet of 61 warships was anchoring in Boston Harbor.<sup>29</sup>

27. M. H. S. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. II, P. 134

28. Broad Sound Passage was not then available.

29. A view of the fleet is at the Bostonian Society.

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27. M. E. S. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. II, p. 134.  
 28. Broad Sound passage was not then available.  
 29. A view of the fleet is at the Postonian Society.



As Sir Hovendon Walker anchored his mighty fleet of English warships off the shores of Pullen Point, the people of this section knew that thrilling days were ahead. Boat after boat was sent ashore on Noddle's Island at Camp Hill, and each craft carried over two score of Marlborough's finest soldiers. Hundreds of tents were soon erected on the hill, and when the sun went down our forefathers saw it set into a vast tent-city of soldiers. The next day the farmers took time off from their tasks to watch the soldiers parade up the easy slopes of the island, marvelling in the precision and grace of the fighting Englishmen. On days when the wind came from the West, the martial music would float across the water, and Pullen Point farmers would enjoy to the fullest the strains of many forgotten airs.<sup>30</sup>

It was a rare spectacle - thousands of the finest troops in the world, the men who had driven the French half across Europe and defeated them at Blenheim, parading in all their glory before the farmers of Pullen Point.

England, however, was about to suffer humiliation. The fleet soon left Boston Harbor, and after a few weeks news came that the entire expedition had failed dismally and was then limping back to England. Walker was later publicly demoted and spent the rest of his life in retirement.

30. William H. Sumner, History of East Boston, P. 87



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30. William H. Sumner, History of East Boston, p. 87



At eleven o'clock in the forenoon on Sunday, October 21, 1716, a strange occurrence took place which affected all eastern Massachusetts. The good people of Pullen Point were over at the Rumney Marsh Meeting House, listening attentively as the second hour of Cheever's sermon began. Gradually the interior of the church grew dim, so dark that those on one side of the aisle could not see their friends on the other side of the church. The long-remembered "Dark Sunday" was upon them. In many churches of New England that day the services were stopped, but we do not know what happened at the little church at Rumney Marsh.

Cotton Mather, whose great-grandson preached the first recorded sermon at Pullen Point, sent an account of the "Dark Sunday" across the water to the Royal Philosophical Society in England. The cause of this strange darkness was never determined.<sup>31</sup>

The autumn which included this dark day was followed by an unusually severe winter, with the highway covered by five feet of snow before December 30. Although not an extremely cold winter, it is doubtful if the snowfall has since been equalled.

On February 6, 1717, there were drifts 25 feet deep and Cotton Mather said that the people were "overwhelmed" with snow. The "Great Snow" of 1717 began February 18, and lasted

31. S. Perley, Great Storms of New England, P. 29





until February 22. Again on February 24 snow fell, and by this time all communication had stopped. The 24th was Sunday, but the people of Pullen Point could not leave their homes. Several one-story buildings were completely covered. Reverend Cheever had to omit the regular services in the Rumney Marsh meeting house, for the ground was covered on the level to a depth of ten feet !

In 1720, the Deane Winthrop farm was divided into four sections. John Grover, as Deane's grandson, owned one-quarter of the 560 acres. He purchased two more quarters, one from his brother, Deane Grover, and another from his cousin, Priscilla Haugh Butler. Joseph Belcher bought the remaining quarter consisting of all the land from Pullen Point Gut to Deane Winthrop's old house, from Priscilla Adams Royal, granddaughter of Deane Winthrop.<sup>32</sup>

Our grandfathers remembered the Minot's Light storm of 1851, when the great waves swept across what is now Winthrop Beach. The tide that year rose to the amazing height of 15.74, but the "Great Storm of 1723" pushed in a tide of 16 feet! The damage to the Pullen Point section must have been relatively heavy in 1723, but no records are available. Some idea of the high tide may be gathered by the contemporary statement that Long Wharf was under three feet of water, while a boat could navigate what is now Devonshire Street in Boston.<sup>33</sup>

32. Suffolk Deeds, L 56 ff 15, 16.

33. Although there are no pictures in existence of the 1723 storm, there is a sketch of the Boston Custom House in the storm of 1851, surrounded by three feet of water.







Sunday evening, October 29, 1727, was a bright moonlight night, and most of the residents of Pullen Point had retired by 10:40 P.M., when a terrible roar and shock awoke the inhabitants and tumbled them out of bed. It was an earthquake.

Dwellings swayed and everyone prayed for deliverance. Those who had been awake said that first the noise had resembled distant thunder. Then the rumbling grew louder, until it was similar to the sound made by heavy carriages driven over pavements, but much fiercer and more awesome to listen to. Then the shock became more violent and the houses rocked and trembled. Another quake followed at eleven o'clock, with two more shocks at three and five in the morning. Thus passed New England's first great earthquake.

Three years later the first representative of one of the three leading families of Winthrop arrived. John Tewksbury became a resident of Pullen Point in the year 1730. He was the son of Henry Tewksbury of Newbury, and the grandson of Henrie Tewksbury, who was made a freeman in Newbury in the year 1669. John Tewksbury was the first of the name to settle in what is now Winthrop.

The ecclesiastical and educational development of this area was relatively slow. Because of the sparse population, it was not until the close of the seventeenth century





that definite plans were made for the mental and moral improvement of the residents of Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point.

The people gradually became conscious of the need for religion and learning. Those eager to improve themselves could travel to Boston but many from this section wanted instructions and guidance at home.

The town fathers of Boston were postponing any action involving financial expenditures, as they hoped to receive the funds from the will of Governor Bellingham. When the people of Pullen Point and Rumney Marsh petitioned for a school in 1701, they were told to await the outcome of the will contest. In the pages of the Record Commissioners Report, for 1701, we read that, "The inhabitants of Rumney Marsh standing by and seeing the town in so good a frame also put in their Request yt a free school might be granted them to teach to Read, Write and Cypher. It being put to the Town to know their minds, it was voted in the affirmative with this proviso, That it did not appear to the selectmen yt there were a suitable number of children, to come to school".<sup>34</sup>

We read that the selectmen agreed that as soon as Rumney Marsh was large enough for a school the people would get it. Eight years passed, with the children either going without their education or receiving it when ever their parents

34. Boston Record Commissioners Report, Vol. VIII, P. 1.



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could spare the time to instruct them. Finally a red-letter day in the history of the section arrived - February 7, 1709.

On that epochal day, the Boston selectmen elected Mr. Thomas Cheever to "attend the keeping such school at his house, four days in a week, weekly, for ye space of one year Ensuing, & render an accot. unto the Selectmen, once every quarter . . . He shall be allowed & paid out of the Town Treasury after the rate of Twenty pounds p annum".

In Mr. Cheever's account we find names of the following families who attended the first three or four years: Tuttle, Floyd, Brintnall, Lewis, Leathe, Wayt, Chamberlane, Hasey, Cole, Pratt, Ritchison, Belcher, and Cheever.<sup>35</sup>

We must keep in mind, of course, that Mr. Cheever's house was not in what is now Winthrop, but Beachmont, although he spent much of his time in this section. He married the daughter of James Bill, Senior, sometime before 1702.

The religious people of Pullen Point and Rumney Marsh had been receiving instruction either at Boston or privately, and in 1706 believed the time had come to have a church of their own. The Town of Boston took action and appointed a committee of five with Samuel Sewall the outstanding member. Month after month went by, with no definite decision. The people became impatient and presented a petition on March 14,

35. Boston Record Commissioners Report, Vol. XI, P. 85.

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85. Boston Record Commissioners Report, Vol. XI, p. 85.



1709, asking for action in the near future. One of the committee men, Joseph Bridham, had died, but Edward Bromfield was appointed to take his place. The other members, Sewall, Elisha Cook, Elish Hutchinson, and Penn Townsend, met with Bromfield.

The committee suggested that 100 pounds be appropriated for a meeting house at Rumney Marsh. Strange as it may seem, twenty people signed a petition against the erection of the meeting house at what is now Revere, and the Bill families of Pullen Point outnumbered the others. Joshua, James, Jonathan, Jonathan Junior, and Joseph Bill all signed the petition against locating the church at what is now Revere, although they must have realized that it would be centrally located for residents of Lynn, Malden, Pullen Point, and Wini-ssimett.<sup>36</sup>

After signing their names, they accepted the inevitable, for the meeting house was begun July 10, 1710. Samuel Sewall sailed down from Boston eight days later to view the meeting house, preferring the breezes of the harbor to the heat of the countryside.<sup>37</sup> It was a very hot day as several people died of the heat at Salem. Three months later, on October 6, 1710, the sone of Lieutenant Hasey gave the lot to members of the church.

36. Boston Record Commissioners Report, Vol. VIII, P. 35.

37. M. H. S. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. II, P. 283

1709, asking for action in the near future. One of the committee men, Joseph Bridgman, had died, but Edward Bromfield was appointed to take his place. The other members, Sewall, Elihu Cook, Eliah Hutchinson, and Penn Townsend, met with Bromfield. The committee suggested that 100 pounds be appropriated for a meeting house at Runney Marsh. Strange as it may seem, twenty people signed a petition against the erection of the meeting house at what is now Revere, and the Bill is- allies of Pullen Point outnumbered the others. Joshua, James, Jonathan, Jonathan Junior, and Joseph Bill all signed the petition against locating the church at what is now Revere, although they must have realized that it would be centrally located for residents of Lynn, Maiden, Pullen Point, and Win- salmest. 38

After signing their names, they accepted the inevi- table, for the meeting house was begun July 10, 1710. Samuel Sewall sailed down from Boston eight days later to view the meeting house, preferring the breezes of the harbor to the heat of the countryside. 37 It was a very hot day as several people died of the heat at Salem. Three months later, on Oc- tober 8, 1710, the sons of Lieutenant Massey gave the lot to members of the church.

38. Boston Record Commissioners' Report, Vol. VIII, p. 35.  
37. M. H. C., Diary of Samuel Sewall, Vol. II, p. 283



As we said before, Thomas Cheever was the first school teacher in this section. Cheever, a graduate of Harvard, 1677, was dismissed from the church in Malden in 1686. He then made his living by tutoring the children of the surrounding area and was often seen at Pullen Point. He became the official instructor for Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point February 7, 1709. Mr. Cheever was ordained the pastor of the Rumney Marsh Meeting House on the 19th of October, 1715. Thus the educational and ecclesiastical reins of Rumney Marsh and Pullen Point were placed in the hands of one man - Thomas Cheever, the Harvard graduate.<sup>38</sup>

Immediately after the conclusion of Reverend Cheever's sermon October 19, 1715, the members of the church met with Dr. Cotton Mather who had come down to Rumney Marsh to investigate conditions, at the new house of Worship.

After the reading of the covenant, Dr. Cotton Mather gave it his official approval, and invited the congregation to join the conference which included the churches of the surrounding countryside. They were happy to accept the honor.

One of the first steps was to obtain a communion service for the church. John Floyd gave ten pounds for a silver cup, with the rest of the service donated by other members of the congregation.<sup>39</sup>

38. Boston Record Commissioners Report, Vol. VIII, P. 59, 60, 61, 62.

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The Rumney Marsh church was represented in the council of 14 churches which met at Watertown on the 2nd of September, 1729. The meeting was for the purpose of discussing the accusations against Reverend David Parsons, the pastor of Leicester Church. It was finally decided that Reverend Parsons had been shamefully treated by his congregations, so after passages from John 13 and Peter 1 had been read the brethren were admonished to "put away from you all bitterness and wrath." <sup>40</sup>

March 1, 1734, it was announced that Deacon John Chamberlain was going to move over to Pullen Point. He gave up his duties as treasurer of the church to the new treasurer, turning over the sum of twelve pounds and eleven shillings. In a few months Deacon Chamberlain was firmly established in Major Edward Gibbons' old residence. He had purchased the Bill farm back in 1726.

The residents of Pullen Point and Rumney Marsh agitated for a separation from Boston in 1734. A committee decided against the plan, however, but it came up again the following year. Three years later 24 people petitioned for a break. Included among the petitioners were John Chamberlain, John Grover, and Joseph Belcher, all landowners from Pullen Point.

The General Court finally granted the request of the petitioners, and the act of separation was signed by Governor

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Jonathan Belcher, January 9, 1739.<sup>41</sup> Thus, after an allegiance of 103 years, Winthrop, Revere, and Chelsea broke away from the town of the Puritans, and became part of the North Shore area.

But the day was not. Speaker Quincy of the House of Representatives ordered Samuel Watts of Chelsea to assemble the voters at a town meeting scheduled for the first Monday of March, 1739, for the purpose of choosing their own officials.<sup>42</sup>

Constable Samuel Flint notified the residents of the town meeting, and at 10:00 a. m., Monday, March 5, the voters met in the vestry of one one meeting house. Samuel Watts was made moderator and Samuel Oliver town clerk. During the afternoon, the entire official list of officers for the town of Chelsea was drawn up before the meeting adjourned.

A second meeting was called for March 26. This meeting was also necessary by the several resignations from the elected board of town officers. It is said that many of the men elected to town office were merely elected because of the fine they would have to pay when they refused to serve in their official capacity. For example, Mr. Elisha Tuttle had been made Surveyor of Highways. The town would not excuse

41. Massachusetts Archives, Vol. CXIV, 499, 500.





PART II, 1739 - 1852

Now that the two areas, Pullen Point and Rumney Marsh, had been set apart from the rest of Boston, and given the name Chelsea, the residents began to wonder if they had done the wisest thing possible under the circumstances.

But the die was cast. Speaker Quincy of the House of Representatives ordered Samuel Watts of Chelsea to assemble the voters at a town meeting scheduled for the first Monday of March, 1739, for the purpose of choosing their town officials.<sup>42</sup>

Constable Samuel Floyd notified the residents of the town meeting, and at 10:00 a. m., Monday, March 5, the voters met in the vestry of the new meeting house. Samuel Watts was made moderator and Nathaniel Oliver town clerk. During the afternoon, the entire official list of officers for the town of Chelsea was drawn up before the meeting adjourned.

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42. Massachusetts Archives, Vol. 114, P. 316.





him, so he paid his fine. Jacob Hasey was elected in his place.

By 1742 the people were not satisfied with the way the affairs of the town were going. They didn't know just what was wrong, but wanted to take action of some sort which might improve conditions. They decided that if they were allowed to annex Hog Island and Noddle's Island, the added land might enable Chelsea to be more prosperous. The inhabitants presented a petition to the General Court asking for the two islands, but the General Court refused their request.

Samuel Floyd, the Pullen Point resident, was slowly working his way up the political ladder. Constable in 1739, Floyd became selectman the next year. In 1764 he represented Chelsea at the General Court. After a long career in both church and state affairs, he died at the age of 85 in 1780.<sup>43</sup>

On November 15, 1739, Ensign Joseph Belcher died. He had married Hannah Bill in 1698 and purchased the Deane Winthrop farm in 1720. This area included all of Point Shirley and the beach up to the Highlands. At his death his widow was left a great apple orchard which stretched all the way up to Cottage Hill.

The deed of acquisition in the Pemberton Square Court House mentions several locations of interest. The Beach Bars are generally believed to have been part of a rail fence which

43. Mellen Chamberlain, History of Chelsea, Vol. II, P. 739





cut across Pullen Point Neck. They had to be taken down when a traveler desired to reach Point Shirley, and replaced after his horse or team had passed through. If the bars were not replaced the cattle might wander all over Pullen Point.<sup>44</sup>

Three other locations are found in various parts of the deed. Attaway's Gate was evidently similar to the Beach Bars. We believe that it was placed in the general vicinity of the Deane Winthrop House.

Ballast Hill was probably Cottage Hill, as ships from early times always came up on the beach near this hill to obtain rocks for ballast. A location known as "The Island" evidently shows us that Point Shirley was practically an island in earliest times.<sup>45</sup>

On January 12, 1748, Elizabeth Belcher sold the land formerly owned by her husband, Joseph Belcher, to Thomas Pratt. The sale included all the "Woods, Water, Members and appurces whatsoever thereto belonging". Pratt, however, was only to keep the land a short time.<sup>46</sup>

In the summer of 1748, Ezekiel Goldthwait<sup>47</sup> made a visit to Pullen Point. He returned in 1749, interested in

44. Suffolk Deeds, Liber 36, P. 216.

45. Suffolk Deeds, Liber 81, P. 154.

46. Suffolk Deeds, Liber 81, P. 155.

47. Goldthwait was Town Clerk and Register of Deeds.





starting a fishing village, and purchased for 500 pounds practically all of what is now Point Shirley. Four years later, he had interested his brother Thomas Goldthwait and six other men.

In 1752, Ezekiel Goldthwait accepted the seven men into partnership in the fishing venture. Saving a quarter interest for himself, he sold his brother an eighth share. The other men, John Rowe, who built Rowe's Wharf in Boston, Henry Atkins, formerly a Boston selectman, together with Nathaniel Holmes, John Baker, and Thomas Mitchell, all purchased one-eighth shares. Holmes was a prominent Roxbury resident, Baker was another Boston selectman, and Thomas Mitchell later became prominent as a Loyalist.

The selectmen of Chelsea were so impressed at the efforts this group of prominent Bostonians were making at Pullen Point that they voted to exempt from taxation the new fishing industry. In the summer of 1753, stately mansions were erected on the hill above the fishing settlement, and Thomas Goldthwait was among the first to make his home there.

Thomas Goldthwait, throughout his residence at the Point, occupied a leading position in Chelsea affairs. At one time, he represented Chelsea in General Court; at another, he was one of three commissioners chosen to settle the affairs of the Land Bank.<sup>48</sup>

The owners of the fishing village planned a great celebration for September, 1753. At this time, as Governor

48. Acts & Resolves of Province of Mass. Bay., Vol. IV, P. 189.







Shirley was in Boston, the proprietors went to him, asking if he could be present for their exercises. He agreed. Four years before, he had laid the cornerstone for the new King's Chapel, and many members of that church were financially interested in the new project at Pullen Point.

September 8, 1753, was the date chosen for the great event. The wharf of John Rowe was probably the starting point for the party on that festive day in September. As the ship sailed down the harbor, there were no fireboats to cheer the voyagers with their parabolas of water, but there was something else equally effective. A new battery of guns, named for Governor Shirley, had recently been constructed on the shore at Castle Island. When the vessel drew abeam of the old fortress, a salute of fifteen guns was given the old soldier by the men at the Castle.

As the cannon shots echoed and re-echoed across the harbor, the populace at the Point went wild with excitement. Soon the craft was visible, and the impatient throng crowded down onto what was then known as Long Wharf.<sup>49</sup>

Gathered around the governor were many gentlemen chosen for their wit and humor, who had joined the party to keep it in merriment. The proud ship slid up to the dock, and the demonstration continued until the banquet started. Then came

49. The remains of this wharf can still be seen about one hundred and fifty yards to the north of what is known as the old steamboat landing.





the time for the greatest announcement of all, that which has caused the name of Shirley to come down to us while the names of the proprietors are known only to the student of history.

Governor Shirley had already agreed to the announcement, which was that Pullen Point was to be changed to Point Shirley, in his honor. The enthusiasm of the crowd was again demonstrated, after which the popular leader gave a speech acknowledging the honor paid him. Then, as the sun was getting low in the west, Governor Shirley and his court boarded their craft and started for Boston. Point Shirley had enjoyed what was perhaps its greatest day.

In the Boston Public Library there is an original document of around 1755 containing a list of men eligible to fight, who were then living at Pullen Point. The sixty-six men making up the list probably had families of from four to six each, so we can roughly estimate that the population of Winthrop at this time was at least 300. The members of three old Winthrop families are mentioned - Nathaniel Belcher, John Belcher, Andrew Tewksbury, who was the father of lifesaver William Tewksbury, Jonathan Bill and Charles Bill.<sup>50</sup>

Thomas Goldthwait had been heavily in debt when he moved to Point Shirley, and Ezekiel decided to let him run the business there to make up the several hundred pounds Thomas was then owing.<sup>51</sup> The town of Boston helped the enterprise by

50. Boston Public Library, XX G.342.12.

51. Josiah Quincy and James Boutineau had each lent him 300 pounds.





leasing Deer Island to the proprietors for the nominal sum of 20 shillings a year, provided the industry use twenty ships from Boston.<sup>52</sup>

In 1758 the members of the town meeting asked the proprietors if they had complied with the terms of the agreement. The proprietors replied that because of the intervention of the French Wars they had not carried out their agreement. Since three or four vessels had been captured by the French, they could not become active again until the war was finished.

From the termination of the fishing business until the end of the war, Point Shirley was used for other purposes. In 1759 troops waiting to be sent to war were quartered at the buildings in Point Shirley.

Because of the British distrust of the inhabitants of Beau-Sejour in Acadia, 12,000 Acadians were taken from their homes and distributed along the coast. More than a thousand of the exiles were eventually landed around Boston Harbor, and the fishing village of Point Shirley received its share. In the letter of Governor Bernard to Jeffrey Amherst, dated September 5, 1762, the Governor states that he "allowed some sick women and children on shore at Shirley Point; where the whole might be accommodated; if the expence was settled and there might be a guard . . . set over them, if they had clothing (as) they brought two months provisions with them." As late as 1763

52. Boston Record Commissioners Reports, Vol. XIV, P. 236.





there were 1100 Acadians in Massachusetts.<sup>53</sup>

Colonel Thomas Goldthwait had assumed control of the fishing industry early in 1754, but the subsequent developments in the French War had placed him directly under Governor Bernard. When the troops were called out from the counties north of Boston, arrangements were made by Goldthwait to have them leave Boston Harbor from his fishing wharf. Goldthwait quartered the troops at Point Shirley until late in the Spring, when they sailed from Long Wharf, Point Shirley, to Louisburg.

Much had happened at Point Shirley, however, in the years between 1753 and 1759. Recalling the prosperous village of 1753, with over sixty men of voting age in the community, we can see to what depths the settlement had fallen by visiting the little fishing village three years later, in 1756. Four men whose names were on the original list still remained. We cannot tell if the families of the men in 1753 accompanied them.

We do know that five families then lived at the Point. Nathan Sergeant, a blacksmith, lived in one end of the large fish warehouse on King street, while the other side was occupied by Israel Trask, a maker of sails for harbor boats. Under the eastern part of the hill stood another warehouse, where John Poarch, a lonely fisherman, lived. At the other end of

53. Longfellow's Evangeline probably received help at Point Shirley. Possibly an old inhabitant still living when Longfellow visited Point Shirley, recalled for the great poet's benefit, the tragedy of this young Acadian girl who lived there. Stranger things have happened.

*Large*







the same building lived Elizabeth Poarch, but we shall probably never know if she was his wife or merely a relative. On the Number Two lot of land running from Fish street down to the sea-side there were eight great fish flakes or wooden frames, ready for countless cod to be dried in the sun. Nearby was the store run at the time by Mrs. Clapham, where the men charged their goods. A huge warehouse stood in back of the store. Another lot running from Fish street to the harbor side had six flakes, with another store standing near the beach. A small dwelling in a ruined condition was occupied by Bosworth, the fisherman. Long Wharf pushed itself into the sea for at least 350 feet, according to fairly accurate estimates. Thus, we see that in three years the Point had become almost a deserted village.

Three years later, when the soldiers were waiting for the troop ships, the buildings were falling apart.

As a means of financially improving their business in 1764, the dreaded sickness, smallpox, was a blessing in disguise to the discouraged proprietors of the Point. It was fatal in effect, however, when it first visited the area. On May 19, 1755, a committee of three was chosen to investigate the money given the people by the General Court because of the smallpox "brought among us by Captain Cussen".

The reference is to the ship of horror which was wrecked on Winthrop Beach three years before. The cowardly captain deserted the ship, leaving John Scalley, one of the



the same building lived Elizabeth Pearson, but we shall not likely  
never know if she was the wife or merely a relative. In the  
number two lot of land running from Fifth street down to the sea-  
side there were eight great black flasks or wooden frames, very  
for comparison and no doubt in the same. Hearty was the name  
run at the time by Mr. O'Brien, where the man carried cattle  
goods. A large weathered block is back of the store. Another  
lot running from Fifth street to the harbor side had six flasks,  
with another store front on the beach. A small dwelling  
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May 16, 1785, a committee of three was chosen to investigate  
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The reference is to the ship of Boston which was  
wrecked on Nantuxet Point three years before. The cowardly  
captain deserted the ship, leaving John Seely, one of the



crew, ill with smallpox. When the tide went down, Captain Cussen sent his crew aboard the ship, the Bumper, to get Scalley. They returned with the victim, who had died, wrapped in a hammock, and buried him under some rocks. Two days later the corpse was discovered by the inhabitants of Point Shirley.

Not knowing the man's sickness, the people had boarded the ship and taken ashore all usable material. As a result Bartholomew Flagg, Benjamin Pratt, Samuel Tuttle, and Thomas Patten died of smallpox.<sup>54</sup>

With the memory of this tragedy still fresh in their minds, the inhabitants of Pullen Point viewed with alarm plans to turn the old fishing center into a smallpox home. The people of Chelsea were very much against the project, but in 1764, the smallpox raged so violently that it was at last agreed upon.

On February 14, 1764, the proprietors of the company voted to allow the victims to be landed at the Point. One week later the selectmen of Boston assigned the houses at Point Shirley as a "Hospital for Inoculation".<sup>55</sup> April 11, 1764, the lease was finally drawn up between the proprietors and the selectmen of Boston.

Two years later, the proprietors were able to rid themselves of the Deer Island problem. April 16, 1766, the

54. Chelsea Selectmen's Records, Vol. I, P. 27.

55. Boston Record Commissioners Reports, Vol XVI, P. 103.

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selectmen of Boston.

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54. Chelsea Selectmen's Records, Vol. I, p. 27.  
55. Boston Record Commissioners Reports, Vol XVI, p. 103.



selectmen of Boston leased part of the Deer Island fishery property to Ebenezer Pratt and Samuel Pratt. At that time there was only one house on the island, that in which Captain Tewksbury lived many years later.

The people of the Winthrop peninsula gradually came to realize the strategic position of their location. Pullen Point was one of two sheltering arms guarding the Port of Boston, and Shirley Gut was a narrow but effective waterway which could be used in an emergency. As relations with the mother country became more and more strained, the citizens of Pullen Point began to think of defending this part of the North Shore. Tentative plans were made for a fort at Point Shirley.

When Benjamin Franklin learned that the dreaded Stamp Act had passed, he wrote his friend Thompson, afterwards secretary to the Continental Congress, that "the sun of liberty has set". From what is now Winthrop, the farmers and fishermen looked over the harbor noticing many of the ships at half-mast in protest of the act.

August 14, 1765, the mob in Boston hung in effigy the stamp distributor, Andrew Oliver, from the old elm known as the Liberty Tree.<sup>56</sup> When the news reached Governor Hutchinson, he ordered the mob to remove the effigy, but nothing was accomplished until evening. As it grew dark a great throng assembled at the Liberty Tree, and the effigy together with one of John,

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Earl of Bute, was marched along Washington street, passing down what is now Newspaper Row until the Old State House was reached. As many as possible crowded into the room directly under the council chamber where Governor Francis Bernard and his assistants were in conference. The crowd then started for Fort Hill, stopping on Kilby street to rip up a great frame where the stamps were to be distributed.

When the mob reached Fort Hill, they built a great bonfire and placed the effigies and the frame on the flames. Whether or not the citizens of Winthrop participated in this demonstration is not known, but probably they remained at home, watching the huge bonfire with misgivings and alarm.

Almost a century before, the hated Andros had been taken prisoner at Castle Island. Perhaps Bernard and Hutchinson believed that history would repeat itself, or it may have been they thought that they would be able to be safer at Fort William, where Bernard had his summer home. Before dawn both men had reached the historic island fortress.

August 26, 1765, another mob visited the mansion of Lt. Governor Hutchinson, destroying and stealing everything of value in his residence, including thousands of priceless documents. This deed by New England men was a calamity for historians.

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Massachusetts Assembly. The resolves were passed by a full house. October 7, the first American Congress met in New York, passing resolves which were sent to the King in England.

The chill winds of November arrived with the Stamp Act still in effect, so new rioting broke out when the Bostonians realized the King would not yield. December came and went but no definite action was taken.

Back in England, Parliament was reassembled in January, 1765. The venerable Pitt, suffering from gout, was assisted into the hall. After others had spoken, he rose and gave his memorable address. This page is not the place to quote from his speech, but the reader's indulgence must be asked for the following prophetic utterance:

"In a good cause . . . the force of this country can crush America to atoms. Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is that the Stamp Act be repealed absolutely, totally, and immediately."

Pitt's advice was followed the next month. May 19, 1766, the people of Winthrop joined in celebrating the repeal of the Stamp Act.

Two years later two regiments of British soldiers sailed past Point Shirley. They were on their way to be quartered in Boston at the expense of the Massachusetts people. Naturally, the people of future Winthrop were quite indignant when they found out the plans of those in power in England, but





nothing of importance occurred until the second of March, 1770. On that day a citizen became involved with one of the soldiers, and plans for retaliation by the civilians were made. Three nights later the soldiers were attacked by a mob, which pelted the officers and men with sticks, snowballs, and stones. A moment later a soldier fired, and his companions followed. This event, the Boston Massacre, caused consternation around Boston Harbor. The people were so enraged that the soldiers were sent back to Castle Island for their own protection.

The Townsend Acts had been passed in 1767. Their object was to pay for the soldiers and officers of the government, in the colonies. Violent opposition again forced leaders of the English government to modify their plans, so all taxes were lifted except a small tax on tea. The people of Winthrop saw that the English were determined to make the Massachusetts villages and towns pay the tax, so when three tea ships slipped into the harbor in December, 1773, most of the inhabitants decided to abstain from tea in the future.

Bostonians, however, took more definite action on the night of December 16, when a group of prominent men, disguised as Mohawk Indians, threw a tenth of a million dollars' worth of tea into the harbor. The next morning many of the packages floated ashore at Winthrop.

After the battles at Lexington and Concord had started the Revolutionary War, conditions around Pullen Point and Point Shirley became acute. The British had stocked the harbor

nothing of importance occurred until the second of March, 1770. On that day a citizen became involved with one of the soldiers, and plans for retaliation by the civilians were made. Three nights later the soldiers were attacked by a mob, which pelted the officers and men with sticks, snowballs, and stones. A moment later a soldier fired, and his companions followed. This event, the Boston Massacre, caused consternation around Boston Harbor. The people were so enraged that the soldiers were sent back to Castle Island for their own protection.

The Townsend Acts had been passed in 1767. Their object was to pay for the soldiers and officers of the government, in the colonies. Violent opposition again forced leaders of the English government to modify their plans, so all taxes were lifted except a small tax on tea. The people of Winthrop saw that the English were determined to make the Massachusetts villages and towns pay the tax, so when three tea ships slipped into the harbor in December, 1773, most of the inhabitants decided to abstain from tea in the future.

Bostonians, however, took more definite action on the night of December 16, when a group of prominent men, disguised as Mohawk Indians, threw a tenth of a million dollars' worth of tea into the harbor. The next morning many of the packages floated ashore at Winthrop.

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May 14, 1775, the order was issued by the American commander to remove all the live stock from Pullen Point, Point Shirley, Snake Island, Hog Island, and Noddle's Island.

At 11:00 a. m., May 27, Colonel John Stark, the Commander of the American troops in Chelsea, crossed the ford from the mainland to Hog Island.

There they were seen by a number of British marines stationed on Henry Howell Williams' farm at Noddles Island. A short skirmish followed but no American was either killed or injured. The shooting was heard by the men on the British warships in the harbor, and an armed schooner was sent up Chelsea Creek to cut off Colonel Stark and his men from the mainland. The schooner carried four six-pounders and twelve swivels, and was accompanied by an armed sloop crowded with British marines. Colonel Stark directed his men to hide in the marshes of Hog Island. Long, narrow drainage ditches had been dug through the marshes, as is the case today.

Soon the ditches were filled with hundreds of Americans, waiting in ambush for the British vessels. When the tide filled up Chelsea Creek the British sailed in, but received a terrific fire from the thousand American soldiers in ambush. The wind now died down, so that the British got out their long boats and began towing their two vessels out of the trap. The



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Americans poured volley after volley down on the unfortunate Englishmen, and the Battalions could not find many targets at which to shoot.

Two cannons, the first ever used by American soldiers, had been placed by the Americans at the site of the Magee's Furnace Foundry. These two pieces poured their deadly charges down upon the helpless ships. When night arrived, the tide was going out rapidly, and the larger vessel, the Diana, soon was aground. The crew fled as best they could in their long-boats, leaving the luckless Diana to the mercy of the Americans. When the Continental forces went over the side of the Diana, it marked the first capture in history of a British warship by Americans.

Although the American losses were light because of their superior plans, those of the English were high. Sixty-four bodies of British marines were landed on Long Wharf, Boston the next morning.<sup>57</sup>

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sent hundreds of poor people from that city ashore at Point Shirley to shift for themselves. These poor sufferers passed a terrible winter at the Point, living as best they could in the abandoned meeting house and the other buildings.

We now come to the Battle of Shirley Gut. On the 17th of May, 1776, Captain James Mugford was cruising in the outer harbor and detected a British powder ship bearing down on him. Since he knew the various channels around the Brewster Islands, Mugford waited for the powder ship. Boarding the vessel, he acquired control in a relatively short time, and in full view of the British fleet in Nantasket Road, slipped through Hypocrite Channel and made his way toward Shirley Gut. The British were aroused, however, and plans were made to overtake the captured powder ship. The English did not dare to follow the clever captain, however.

In maneuvering the ship through the treacherous waters of the Gut, Mugford ran the powder ship aground. Sending word to Boston for aid, he was enjoyably surprised to see boats of all sorts sailing down to the Gut, and soon the cargo was being unloaded. The powder ship was brought up to Boston at high tide.

Two days later, May 19, Captain Mugford on the Franklin, with Captain Cunningham on the Lady Washington sailed down the harbor, but because the tide was too far out, the Franklin grounded in Shirley Gut. This was the chance for which the British had been waiting and Mugford knew it. Going ashore on







Deer Island with Cunningham, Mugford went to the top of Signal Hill and trained his telescope on the British warships. He could see activity on the ships as the men prepared their whaleboats for the trip to Shirley Gut. The two American captains returned to their boats and prepared for the battle.

After several warnings the American ships began to fire at the thirteen boatloads of British sailors and marines. Soon the enemies were at close quarters, and the tide of battle swayed first one way and then another. Tradition tells us that not one Englishman set foot on either boat. At the height of the battle Mugford was shot, and his immortal "Don't give up the ship" admonition was given as they carried him below. A few minutes later the battle was over and the British had fled. Seventy men were lost by the British, while Mugford was the only American to die in this outstanding victory.

One of the British whaleboats drifted ashore the next morning near the present location of Sunnyside Avenue, and two children were the first to discover it. When the tide went out they climbed aboard, but were frightened terribly when they saw in it the body of a British Marine killed in the battle. The tradition is that he was buried near the place the children found him.

The Revolutionary War left Winthrop in a sad state, but with the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown the farmers believed better times were ahead. More crops were planted year by year, until the fields were filled with vegetables, and when







autumn came the barns were bulging with produce. But the winter of '86 was coming.

The winter of 1786 was one long to be remembered by the people of Winthrop and the surrounding settlements. Boston Harbor had started to freeze over before the end of November, and December began cold and ominous.

When the Winthrop farmers arose on the morning of Monday, December 4, they noticed conditions were ideal for a snow storm, and sure enough, before they sat down to their noonday meal, a piercing northeast wind set in. Just about twelve o'clock the first flakes began to fall, and soon a blinding snow storm was raging. The gale became violent, with the visibility lowered to less than fifty yards in any direction. The Winthrop farmers probably stayed inside that afternoon. They were, of course, all good sailors in those days, and probably offered prayers for the safety of the men at sea. Those who have been at sea in a snow storm know the feeling of hopelessness experienced during a bad blow when it is impossible to see more than a few score yards.

Three miles from Winthrop, on Lovell's Island, a packet from Maine went ashore, with the thirteen passengers and crew getting ashore on the lonely island in safety, only to meet what was possibly a worse fate than drowning. After hunting vainly on the island for shelter, they all climbed to the top of a great rock on a hill (which can still be identified). Here they crouched in the lee while the storm increased







in intensity and the air grew colder. The temperature in surrounding towns that night went far below zero, and before dawn all had frozen to death, except one man, Theodore Kingsley, of Wrentham. Two lovers, who had been among the passengers to Boston, perished in each other's arms. The roving poet of Boston Harbor, Frederick William Augustus Steuben Brown, who was influential in starting the first Methodist church in Winthrop, tells us of the tragedy:

Among the rest, a youthful pair,  
Who from their early youth;  
Had felt of love an equal share,  
Adorned with equal truth  
Lay prostrate mid the dire alarms,  
Had calm resign'd their breath;  
Fast locked within each other's arms,  
Together sunk in death.

The rock where the tragedy took place, now called Lovers' Rock, can still be pointed out by the island inhabitants.

The east wind, however, was not yet finished with his fatal work. The brig Lucretia, under Captain Powell, had left St. Croix, the week before with one of the owners, a Mr. Sharp, aboard. The waves which had pushed the little Maine packet ashore at Lovell's Island, December 4, had not affected the Lucretia, which rode out the night at the edge of the harbor. Tuesday morning, probably at dawn, she slipped anchor and sailed for the pier in Boston. The wind grew stronger, with the snow pelting harder, and the brig crashed on Point Shirley Beach about nine a. m. There were eleven on board and Mr. Sharp, together with the first mate and three of the crew, jumped into







the surf. They succeeded in reaching the deep snow on Gut Plain in safety. The others on board envied the daring of the five ashore, but they, as it turned out, were the lucky ones.

The five ashore floundered around in the snow looking for shelter, until one by one they fell exhausted in the deep rifts and perished. Captain Powell and the rest of the men remained on the Lucretia until the storm ended, and then went ashore. The remains of the five men were gradually dug out of the snow drifts, and Mr. Sharp's body was taken in state to Boston. His funeral was held in Boston at the American Coffee House, on State street, December 12, 1786.<sup>58</sup>

The farmers hardly had time to recover from the storm when it began again, December 7. By Sunday the highways were hopelessly covered. No religious services were held anywhere around Boston that day as no one could reach the meeting houses. Those who experienced this terrible gale regarded it as the worst of the century.

Thomas Hancock, uncle of John Hancock, had become a Point Shirley proprietor. When he died, John took over the property. John Hancock spent many happy summers at the Point. There is still in existence a letter written by Dorothy Hancock, addressed to Point Shirley by way of Apple Island. Evidently the Bostonians considered the waterway between Bird Island

58. Sidney Perley, Historic Storms of New England, P. 125.





Passage and Apple Island more efficient than the passage around by the mainland.

James Tewksbury, who resided at Point Shirley for many years, had been one of the "Point Shirley Minute Men". His son, William, became known all along the Atlantic coast for his ability in saving shipwrecked sailors from death. His first rescue took place in 1799. In December of this year, William Tewksbury saved an English sailor who had fallen from a vessel anchored in the harbor. The following year he rescued a sailor from the masthead of a schooner which had crashed off Fawn Bar. At this time he was assisted by his colored boy, Black Sam, who later perished crossing Shirley Gut. In March, 1809, Tewksbury gained more recognition by saving Thomas Gould from his wrecked pikey boat. This rescue was made at Winthrop Bar, mistakenly called Fawn Bar by many.<sup>59</sup>

On Monday, June 16, 1806, occurred the only total eclipse during the nineteenth century, visible in what is now Winthrop. There had been a light frost the evening before, and the temperature was 63 when the eclipse began. When the eclipse was total, the temperature was down to  $55\frac{1}{2}$ , and dew formed on the grass. The journals of the time tell us that the sudden change in the temperature caused the death of some of those who had been overheated, but this statement appears rather difficult

59. William Tudor, A Discorse before the Humane Society, P.21







AIR VIEW OF WINTHROP TAKEN BY E. R. SNOW IN THE YEAR 1939









to believe.

As the eclipse began, the stars came out one by one until finally Venus was seen in the west, Sirius on the south-east, and Aldeberan, Mars, Mercury and Procyon were plainly discernible. The effect of the darkness on the cattle in the pastures was interesting. Cattle ceased feeding, and started for the barns. Fowls went to roost, and bees came back to their hives. The eclipse was total for more than five minutes, and when the sun again began to peep out and enlighten the world, the joyous crowing of roosters could be heard from all the farms of Winthrop.

Fifty minutes past twelve the sun was again free to shine in the heavens, and the Winthrop farmers and fishermen returned to their tasks, perhaps a bit more respectful toward the wonders of the universe, thinking along with Ramsey:

"How vast is little man's capricious soul  
That knows how orbs through wilds of ether roll".<sup>60</sup>

We now come to the period in Point Shirley's history when the hum of business begins anew. Because of the many opportunities in Boston, many young men left Cape Cod and the surrounding area to move to the city.

Russell Sturgis, who was born August 17, 1750, was among the first to appreciate the advantages of moving to Boston. He was the son of Thomas Sturgis of Barnstable. Russell

60. Sidney Perley, Historic Storms of New England.

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knew by heart the process whereby the salt could be extracted profitably from the ocean and believed the ruined buildings and warehouses of Point Shirley could be utilized to good advantage for the salt works.

Journeying down to Winthrop early in the year 1803, Sturgis was fully decided that the making of salt would be a good venture, so on March 22, 1803, he purchased one and one-half rights in Point Shirley for \$1200.

The following year, the three most important land owners of the Point and what is now Winthrop Beach<sup>61</sup> agreed to divide their property, hiring Osgood Carleton, a prominent surveyor, to arrange the partition. Carleton worked on the division during the summer of 1804. On September 24, 1804, the three met again and Osgood Carleton's map was approved. Elisha Baker was of the same family as John Baker, one of the original Point Shirley proprietors.

We cannot say definitely when the salt business began at Point Shirley but some day it is hoped we may find some documentary evidence which will help us. Sturgis and Parker were now in charge at the Point, but their partnership was soon to end. On February 11, 1806, Nathaniel Parker sold 79 acres of the land there to Russell Sturgis, for \$5000.

Russell Sturgis' younger brother, Samuel, who was born in 1762, had married Lucretia Jennings in 1786. They lived in

61. Elisha Baker, Russell Sturgis, and Nathaniel Parker.

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61. Eliza Baker, Russell Sturgis, and Nathaniel Parker.



Boston until December 12, 1811, when Lucretia Jennings Sturgis died of a broken heart because her children had either died or moved away. The month before, their oldest daughter, Lucretia, had married the noted Joshua Bates (after whom Bates Hall is named in the Boston Public Library) and a few years before that their first born, Thomas, had been lost at sea. Samuel was now given the position of running the salt works of Point Shirley and moved into a house on Siren street.<sup>62</sup>

June 19, 1812 the United States declared war against England, but this act was decidedly unpopular in Boston and New England. So confident were the British that the New Englanders would eventually rebel from the rest of the country that they did not blockade Boston Harbor for many months. Finally, giving up hope that this section of the country would favor them, the English decided to prevent commerce to and from Boston. Early in April 1813, the Shannon and the Tenedos appeared off Boston Light. Commander Lawrence now arrived in Boston to take command of the Chesapeake, then undergoing repairs.

May 30, he cast loose from Long Wharf, Boston, and dropped down to President Road, where he had the intention of "lying there a few days and shaking down before going to sea". The people in Winthrop saw the warship perhaps a half mile from Point Shirley, and then looking in the other direction could make out the Shannon and the Tenedos, hull down on the

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Lawrence made immediate preparations to sail into battle, and the next morning the Chesapeake weighed anchor and started for combat with the Shannon. When the people of Winthrop saw the American ship start for the outer harbor, they gathered at Grover's Cliff and waited for the coming sea fight. As the Chesapeake bore down on the Shannon, the Shannon headed for the open sea and then turned, so that the two vessels came together about five miles off Boston Light.

The first cannon shot was heard in Winthrop at 5:50 p. m., and the firing lasted but fifteen minutes, when it was seen that the English vessel had captured the Chesapeake. Among the disappointed Winthrop spectators was Miss Sarah Tewksbury, who later became Mrs. Proctor. In later years she told of seeing the smoke from the cannons and of hearing the reports of the battle.

The farmers of Winthrop cheered when the Constitution sailed into Boston Harbor April 22, 1814, but when a blockade of several British ships was begun they became concerned as to whether the famous frigate were not bottled up. The summer went by, and the cool breezes of autumn changed to the penetrating chill of November, but the blockade continued.

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long boats filled with American sailors came over to Winthrop and landed at Shirley Gut. These men remained there several days, surveying and sounding. They found that at high tide the Constitution, which drew 24 feet, could negotiate the Gut under favorable conditions.

Between two of the islands in the outer Harbor is a passage still known as Hypocrite Channel. It is located between Green Island and Little Calf Island. The sailors told Mr. Sturgis that their next goal was this passage, where they were to make accurate surveys and soundings. The following week, the long boats headed for the Outer Harbor, and not only discovered that the Constitution would easily be able to negotiate the passage which James Mugford had used 38 years before, but found one place where the water was 84 feet deep.

Preparations were now complete for the escape of the Constitution, and so when an easterly storm swept the coast with unusually high tides, Commander Stewart had everything ready for a quick exodus. When, on December 17, the wind changed to the west, Stewart knew the time had come. Probably an hour before high tide, he weighed anchor off Long Wharf and started for Shirley Gut. What a pretty picture the farmers and salt workers of Winthrop must have been privileged to enjoy as "Old Ironsides" cut in towards Pullen Point. Reaching the whirling eddies of Shirley Gut at high water, the Constitution swept gracefully between Winthrop and Deer Island.





We can well imagine what a cheer went up from the farmers and the workmen from the Sturgis plant who gathered on the shore to watch the great sight. A half hour later the Constitution rounded Great Fawn Bar, slipped in between the Devil's Back Ledge and Half Tide Rocks and was sailing between Little Calf Island and Green Island. The Constitution in another hour had left the Brewster Islands far astern and was free.<sup>63</sup>

The salt industry at the Point was supplied by a general store, located near the present Roman Catholic Church. One day the workers at the Point were surprised to see a colored boy of fifteen walk into the store. He obtained a substantial supply of groceries and, when given his bill, paid the amount in English gold.

After the colored boy, who told the store people his name was Black Jack, rowed away from the beach, the people watched him land a half hour later at Apple Island. When a week had passed the boy again landed for supplies and before the season had ended, the entire story of this Apple Island colored boy was known.

Black Jack had been a young boy in Africa, until he was captured by a slaver, alleged to be Captain William Marsh. Marsh took a fancy to the young colored boy and made

63. Fawn Bar is spelled with a W, and not with a U, as was indicated by the town when it named Faun Bar Avenue.



The car with engine was a 1967 Ford Mustang. The car was driven by a white male, approximately 25 years of age, with dark hair and eyes. The car was seen on the street in front of the house at 1234 Main Street, New York, New York, on the night of the murder. The car was seen in the area of the house at 1234 Main Street, New York, New York, on the night of the murder. The car was seen in the area of the house at 1234 Main Street, New York, New York, on the night of the murder.

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Black Jack visited Point Shirley every month, purchasing such supplies as he needed. The Marsh family grew yearly, until there were twelve children in all. William Marsh, however, passed away on November 22, 1833 and his house was destroyed two years later, forcing the family to move to the mainland. Marsh had been buried at Apple Island, the place he had grown to love. The daughters married into the Winthrop families, and their descendants are still with us. The sons moved away, achieving success wherever they located.

This mysterious captain had all Winthrop aroused as to his true name and background, but they never learned more than what the slave told them, and of that they could not be sure.

Oliver Wendell Holmes visited the island shortly after the fire of 1835, and the burned timbers together with the story, so impressed him that he wrote "An Island Ruin" a few lines of which follow:

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They told strange things of that mysterious man;  
 Believe who will, deny them such as can;  
 He came, a silent pilgrim to the West,  
 Some old world mystery throbbing in his breast;  
 Close to the thronging mart he lived alone;  
 He lived; he died. The rest is all unknown.

An interesting sequel occurred a few years ago, when a young boy was standing on the Winthrop seashore facing Apple Island. A car from Pennsylvania drove up, and a lady alighted. She asked the youth if he could row her over to Apple Island, but as the tide was dead low, he told her it was impossible. After spending a few minutes looking over at the great elm on Apple Island, she climbed back into the car, and the vehicle moved slowly away. The lady was the great-granddaughter of William Marsh.

Nathaniel Parker sold out his entire interest in the salt works to Russell Sturgis, March 13, 1815, for \$7,000. Four years later, Reverend Frederick W. A. S. Brown, who was a signal man at Deer Island, composed his unusual rhymes about Point Shirley. They should interest the reader:

Point Shirley, to forget, oh muse,  
 Indeed would be a fault  
 Which Sturgis never would forgive  
 Who manufacturers salt.

With him how many hours I've sat  
 Ah, happy hours they were  
 Engaged in friendly, social, chat,  
 That eased the breast of care.

To all her tribute of respect,  
 The muse would offer here;  
 And oft on Shirley will reflect,  
 And drop affection's tear.





Charles Russell Sturgis, who was born in 1803, moved to Winthrop with his father in 1812 and grew up to love the Point. One day he began sketching the houses on what is now Siren Avenue, showing the salt works at the extreme left of the picture. The sketch is at present in the vault at the Winthrop Public Library, a notable document of over one hundred years ago.

Many tons of salt were sold by Sturgis during the early 19th century from his vats at Point Shirley. These large vats were in the shape of circular tanks, with covers resembling four-leaf clovers, which could be slid over the vats at short notice. Salt at this time was selling at about three dollars a barrel, this of course for the coarse variety. There was a large reservoir on the beach, which was filled at every tide. The water from the reservoir was forced a few rods through some logs, by a windmill, finally reaching the vats. It must have been a pretty sight, on a summer's day, when the picturesque windmill was spinning slowly around.

In 1832, John W. Tewksbury and his father-in-law, Samuel Leeds, purchased the salt works from the widow of Russell Sturgis. Stories have been told by his descendants of the rush to cover over the salt vats at the approach of a sudden shower, as it was as important that the rain water should be kept away from the salt as that the water itself should properly evaporate. Gradually, however, new ideas came into vogue, and the salt works at Winthrop became impractical.



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and the salt works at Wintthrop became impractical.



Across the Gut, Captain William Tewksbury was gaining a reputation for his genial hospitality and his ability to save lives. Our rhyming signal man, of Deer Island, Frederick Brown, composed the following about William Tewksbury:

Ye sons of festive mirth and dance,  
To Tewksbury's hall repair;  
His kind attentions will enhance,  
Your pleasures while you're there.  
There shaded by some willow trees,  
The bowling alleys lay,  
With seats, where you may sit at ease,  
When not inclined to play.

When not inclined to dance or sing,  
Upon a lofty tree  
There hangs a strong, well-guarded swing,  
From every danger free  
Which, swiftly through the yielding air,  
In steady, lofty flight,  
Will gentleman or lady fair,  
Convey with pure delight. 65

Tewksbury's famous rescue of 1817 has been remembered down through the years. On May 26, of that year, a pleasure boat went down, with Tewksbury eventually rescuing seven of the eight on board. For this truly amazing rescue he was praised from Boston to Baltimore. But Tewksbury was getting along in years and desired to retire to the mainland at Point Shirley. He purchased some of the property formerly owned by Russell Sturgis, and when John W. Tewksbury, his cousin, bought property there with Samuel Leeds, the captain believed they should make an agreement. Alexander Wadsworth at that time was considered the best surveyor around the city of Boston, so in the

65. F. W. A. S. Brown, Valedictory Poem, P. 34.



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When not inclined to dance or sing,  
Upon a jolly tree  
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Tewksbury's famous rescue of 1817 has been remembered  
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sidered the best surveyor around the city of Boston, so in the



spring of 1841 the three men asked him to survey Point Shirley. The trouble was in the section known as Short Beach, running from what is now Ridgeway's Corner to the bend on Shirley Street. The survey was finished in the middle of April and on April 20, 1841, the three men, William Tewksbury, John W. Tewksbury, and Samuel Leeds, entered into an agreement whereby they divided all Point Shirley. The plan of the Point at that time can still be seen, with two houses, William Tewksbury's and John W. Tewksbury's indicated.<sup>66</sup>

Four years later Captain William Tewksbury rented part of his land to the Revere Copper Company for \$50. a year, with the provision that the treasurer of the Revere Copper Company, James Davis, pay the taxes. The rental was for ten years, starting December 21, 1845.

As the Sturgis name fades out of the Point Shirley picture we should remember Captain Josiah Sturgis, son of Samuel Sturgis, whose naval chapeau and sword are under glass in the Pullen Point room of the Winthrop Public Library. Born in 1794, Josiah Sturgis early took to the sea. In 1809, he was on the schooner Mary, which was chased by the British frigate Cleopatra while off the Cape Verde Islands, and eventually sunk by the British frigate. He finally arrived back in Boston. He then shipped to China. Coming back to Boston Harbor in 1832, Josiah Sturgis was commissioned First Lieutenant in the Revenue Service, July 4, 1832, and became cap-  
66. Suffolk Deeds, Liber 96, f. 15.





tain in 1839. Captain Sturgis visited Point Shirley almost every time he was ashore. Sturgis died aboard the Revenue Cutter, Hamilton, June 28, 1850.<sup>67</sup>

When the triple hurricanes of December, 1839, caught the residents of Winthrop unprepared, many sloops were disabled. The first gale began December 15, drowning over fifty persons before it went down, and scattering 22 wrecks about Massachusetts Bay. The Catherine Nichols was wrecked on Nahant, and it is believed that a chest of money floated across the harbor to Grover's Cliff, Winthrop. December 22 saw another fierce gale, followed five days later by what was claimed by some to be the worst storm of all.

In 1830 Chelsea proper had less than 50 residents, with the population of Noddle's Island about 10 and Breed's Island 5 or 6. With the coming of the East Boston Land Company, Noddle's Island grew rapidly, while what is now Chelsea doubled and tripled its population from year to year. A ferry was started between East Boston and the city and it was soon deemed necessary to build a bridge across from Winthrop to Breed's Island.

Joseph Burrill, Joseph Belcher and John W. Tewksbury obtained a charter for the Winthrop bridge in 1835. The first traffic across to Breed's Island began four years later. It was a free bridge until 1843, but when some of the subscribers

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failed to meet their obligations, tolls were charged. The board which listed the prices for crossing the bridge is still preserved at the Winthrop Public Library. It reads as follows:

- Rate of Toll Established by Law -

- 1 cent for each foot Passenger
- 5 cents for each Horse and Rider
- 10 cents for each Horse and Chaise, Chair or Sulky
- 17 cents for each Coach, Chariot, or other four-wheeled Carriages drawn by two or more Horses
- 8 cents for each Cart or Wagon drawn by one or two Horses, and 10 cents if more than two Horses.
- 6 cents for each Cart or Wagon drawn by two Oxen
- 8 cents if more than two Oxen
- 6 cents for each Truck or Dray drawn by one Horse
- 8 cents for more than one Horse
- 8 cents for each Sleigh with one Horse
- 10 cents if more than one Horse
- 6 cents for each Sled drawn by two Oxen
- 8 cents if more than two Oxen
- 5 cents for each Sled or Pung, drawn by one Horse, if more than one 2 cents for each extra Horse
- 2 cents each for Horses and Cattle
- 6 cents per doz. for Sheep and Swine

Winthrop was startled by a great display of meteors in the early morning hours of November 13, 1833. The shooting meteors left trails of white light which curved downward. The meteors fell in such quantities that at times they resembled a shower of fire. Great numbers were seen to explode like rockets and an explosive noise could later be heard. It was estimated that 200,000 of these heavenly bodies fell between one and four that morning.

Over in Boston the bright meteors lighted up a church steeple, and many residents rushed out into the streets, believing a great conflagration was taking place.



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- Rate of Toll Established by Law -

- 1 cent for each foot passenger
- 5 cents for each Horse and Rider
- 10 cents for each Horse and Chaise, Chair or Sully
- 15 cents for each Coach, Carriage, or other four-wheeled Carriage drawn by two or more Horses
- 5 cents for each Cart or Wagon drawn by one or two Horses, and 10 cents if more than two Horses.
- 5 cents for each Cart or Wagon drawn by two Oxen
- 5 cents if more than two Oxen
- 5 cents for each Truck or Wray drawn by one Horse
- 5 cents for more than one Horse
- 5 cents for each Sleigh with one Horse
- 10 cents if more than one Horse
- 5 cents for each sled drawn by two Oxen
- 5 cents if more than two Oxen
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The winter of 1835 - 1836 was probably the severest of the century. Stories have come down to us of sleigh rides from Point Shirley to Boston Light, and of driving right across the harbor. Just how much of this we should believe is a matter of conjecture, but we do know that the temperature on Wednesday, December 16, 1835 was 18 below zero.

Sometime before August 1839 an unusual tragedy took place at Point Shirley. A master baker, who had won a large sum of money in a lottery, visited Shirley Gut. He was sitting in a drunken stupor in his carriage, when a group of people walked down the beach to see the swirling currents pass through the Gut. Suddenly the baker stood up in his carriage and grabbed his whip.

"I'll show you a feat that Napoleon Bonaparte did not dare to perform", he shouted, giving his horse a severe cut with the whip. The infuriated animal dashed for the Gut; a moment later horse, man, and carriage were being twisted and lashed by the treacherous current. The man and the horse both drowned. It was remarked at the time that the loss of the horse was to be regretted; that of the man was his just reward.<sup>68</sup>

We are now rapidly approaching the period when many still living can tell us about Winthrop's mid-century history. Perhaps the person best qualified to help us in the period up

68. E. C. Wines, A Trip to Boston, P. 76



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Sometime before August 1839 an unusual tragedy took place at Point Shirley. A master baker, who had won a large sum of money in a lottery, visited Shirley Cut. He was sitting in a drunken stupor in his carriage, when a group of people walked down the beach to see the swirling currents pass through the Cut. Suddenly the baker stood up in his carriage and grabbed his whip.

"I'll show you a feat that Napoleon Bonaparte did not dare to perform", he shouted, giving his horse a severe cut with the whip. The infuriated animal dashed for the Cut; a moment later horse, man, and carriage were being twisted and flung by the treacherous current. The man and the horse both drowned. It was remarked at the time that the loss of the horse was to be regretted; that of the man was his just reward.<sup>88</sup>

We are now rapidly approaching the period when many still living can tell us about Wintrop's mid-century history. Perhaps the person best qualified to help us in the period up

88. E. C. Wines, A Trip to Boston, p. 78.



to 1852 is Miss Amanda Floyd of Main Street. Because of her mother's excellent memory, which Miss Floyd inherited, many fascinating anecdotes have been preserved for posterity.

Born a few years before the Civil War, Miss Floyd has watched the town grow through many periods of change. Her mother remembered when there were ten houses in Winthrop, exclusive of Point Shirley. Let us go back to the period just before Miss Amanda Floyd was born, and see Winthrop as her mother, Lucretia Tewksbury Floyd, saw it.

The Deane Winthrop House was then owned by the Winthrop heirs; the old Bill house was still standing near what is now Beal street. Samuel Tewksbury lived where the house at 36 Pleasant street stands today.

At that time John Sargent Tewksbury was living in Winthrop Center, while William Wales' dwelling was near the present Thornton Park. John Burrill's residence stood in back of what is now Wadsworth Block, with the house of Joseph Belcher near Washington avenue. Samuel Belcher lived where Ocean View street stands today; Washington Tewksbury's residence was near Washington street, named after him. Eben Burrill's residence has not yet been definitely located.

Miss Amanda Floyd has many interesting curios and relics of the past century at her attractive residence near the corner of Hermon and Main streets. The house dated 1842 has been an outstanding landmark for nearly a century.

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The Deane Winthrop House was then owned by the Winthrop heirs; the old Bill House was still standing near what is now Pearl Street. Samuel Tewksbury lived where the house at 36 Pleasant Street stands today.

At that time John Sargent Tewksbury was living in Winthrop Center, while William Wales' dwelling was near the present Thornton Park. John Bartlett's residence stood in back of what is now Wedgworth Block, with the house of Joseph Belcher near Washington Avenue. Samuel Belcher lived where Ocean View Street stands today; Washington Tewksbury's residence was near Washington Street, named after him. Eben Bartlett's residence has not yet been definitely located.

Miss Amanda Floyd has many interesting curios and relics of the past century at her attractive residence near the corner of Harmon and Main Streets. The house dated 1842 has been an outstanding landmark for nearly a century.



When Miss Floyd's grandfather, John W. Tewksbury, was living in the old Tewksbury house, Miss Amanda Floyd's great-grandfather, Samuel Sturgis, moved to the house next door. Abigail, his daughter, fell in love with J. W. Tewksbury and they were married in 1820.

The period from 1840 on saw many hotels erected around Boston. Taft's Tavern was known as old Winnisimmet to many epicureans.

The owner of Taft's Tavern at Chelsea established a similar eating establishment at Point Shirley about the time the toll bridge was erected, and the reputation of Taft's Hotel became known all about Boston.

The year 1851 brought two elements of danger to Mr. Taft, water and fire. April 15, 1851, the terrible Minot's Light Gale, which destroyed the first lighthouse on the lonely ledge off Cohasset, began. The waves also broke completely over Taft's Hotel, demolishing the front of the building. The occupants fled to higher ground, stopping with Mr. Wyman for the night. The wind shrieked and the tide rose. At the height of the storm the roof of the Taft barn was carried away, landing on a pleasure yacht on the back beach and demolishing it. For days after the storm, the road to Winthrop was practically impassable. The passage through Shirley Gut was made nearly twice as wide by the action of the waves.

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in the weekly magazine of the period, showing several figures hurrying to put out the fire. Whether or not the Deer Island fire engine was used is an interesting conjecture, as the engine had been built in 1828.

The toll bridge from Winthrop to Breed's Island was carried away in this storm of April 1851, and the great forest where Ingleside Park stands was permanently injured.

All over Winthrop, residents had narrow escapes. The Fay family, then living at Winthrop Beach, suffered greatly when the surf broke against the building. The occupants of the house were rescued with difficulty and taken to safety.

Deer Island was the scene of many thrilling escapes. The great tide broke over the entire island, and the sea wall built a few years before was demolished. Three buildings on the island were carried out to sea, one of them being the school house. The school master awoke the morning of the storm to find his own home surrounded by water. Dressing hurriedly, he waded through water three feet deep to reach the building where the boys were sleeping. The boys dressed and found the water was now five feet deep. At midnight the waves lifted the house off the foundation, breaking the roof of the building. The master and his boys were rescued at dawn by men in ox teams, as the tide was then low. At ten o'clock the two houses were carried away by the great seas sweeping over the island.

At Pleasant Beach Isaiah Baker's three story public house was broken to pieces by the waves. Several vessels came



in the weekly magazine of the period, showing several figures hurrying to put out the fire. Whether or not the Bear Island fire engine was used is an interesting conjecture, as the engine had been built in 1888.

The toll bridge from Winthrop to Rye's Island was carried away in this storm of April 1881, and the great forest where Ingleside Park stands was permanently injured.

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The period around 1845 was one of great interest in Chelsea; by that time the area known as the Ferry or Winnisimmet had a population of between 4,000 and 5,000 people. Plans for sewers, fire departments, and policemen were being made, and the residents of what is now Revere and Winthrop believed they no longer had anything in common with Chelsea. Joseph Stowers and almost a hundred other residents of Rumney Marsh then petitioned the General Court of 1845 for the right to separate from Chelsea, taking the name of Cushman.

The people of Pullen Point organized to reject the new plan. Led by David Belcher, they declared that their future lay toward Boston, and they did not desire to become part of Cushman. After hearing the evidence, the legislature voted to wait a year before reaching a decision.

In 1846, an act was passed March 19, which made Winthrop a part of the new town of North Chelsea. Many fine men moved here in this period. Judge E. G. Loring, Hiram Plummer, Charles L. Bartlett, George B. Emerson were among the prominent new comers of this time. Fred W. Davis, Theodore Smith and Daniel Long had already established themselves at the Point, while Taft's Hotel brought many guests during the hot summer months.

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bridge was purchased from the proprietor by the City of Boston, July 1, 1850, and became a public highway.

The next year, 1851, a movement began which was to make Winthrop a town. Hiram Plummer led the agitation for setting Winthrop off from North Chelsea and annexing it to Boston. Representative Edward Floyd presented the petition in person, but the act brought a small wave of opposition. David Belcher, who had opposed our becoming part of Cushman, now took a stand against the action, so the petition was tabled for a year.

It was about the year 1851 that Winthrop had a very distinguished visitor - the great Giuseppe Garibaldi. Charles L. Bartlett, then living in what is now Winthrop, was engaged in the fertilizer business in Boston. One day a schooner from Peru came up to the dock, and Bartlett recognized the great Italian liberator as the captain. Welcoming the patriot from across the ocean, Bartlett invited him down to Winthrop to visit.

William Francis Bartlett, who, according to Channing Howard, is one of the two greatest Winthrop men, was then <sup>a</sup> boy. Bartlett became a close friend of the Italian, and many hours were spent in walking up and down the hills and meadows of Winthrop, and exploring our coast line. Giuseppe Garibaldi remained at the home of Charles Bartlett for over a month. Young Bartlett never forgot him. William Bartlett achieved everlasting recognition in the Civil War, while Garibaldi's exploits

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have made him one of Europe's greatest liberals.

Bartlett left Harvard College to fight the South in 1861. He lost a leg, but continued to fight for his country. Riding into battle on a horse he made an easy target for the Southern rifles, but they refrained from shooting "such a brave man". Captured before Petersburg in the mine crater, Bartlett languished in the Southern prison camp until relief finally came.

Over in Italy, Garibaldi had routed the Neapolitans at the battle of Calatafimi, May 15, 1860, and had become dictator of Sicily. Turning the government over to his king, Victor Emmanuel, Garibaldi retired to Caprera. He later made the mistake of attempting to gain further territory for Italy, and his king, afraid that Europe might declare war, was forced to punish the patriot.

Years afterward William Francis Bartlett visited Garibaldi and renewed their friendship of the 50's. What a happy reunion it must have been and how much the two men must have had to discuss.

We have already discussed the conflicting plans of our early citizens in their efforts to establish better local government. We recall that David Belcher had objected to the petition of Representative Edward Floyd, whereupon the plan had been shelved until the following year.

When the Legislature of 1852 convened, the petition

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Riding into battle on a horse he made an easy target for the  
Southern rifles, but they refrained from shooting "such a brave  
man". Captured before Petersburg in the same year, Bartlett  
langushed in the Southern prison camp until relief finally

came.

Over in Italy, Garibaldi had routed the Neapolitans.

at the battle of Calatafimi, May 18, 1860, and had become dic-  
tator of Sicily. Turning the government over to his king, Victor  
Emmanuel, Garibaldi retired to Capri. He later made the mis-  
take of attempting to gain further territory for Italy, and his  
king, afraid that Europe might declare war, was forced to punish  
the patriot.

Years afterward William Francis Bartlett visited Gar-

ibaldi and renewed their friendship of the 50's. What a happy  
reunion it must have been and how much the two men must have  
had to discuss.

We have already discussed the conflicting plans of  
our early citizens in their efforts to establish better local  
government. We recall that David Seliger had objected to the  
petition of Representative Edward Floyd, whereas the plan had  
been shelved until the following year.

When the Legislature of 1858 convened, the petition





VIEW OF INDIAN GRAVES AT WINTHROP







was again presented. Almost every prominent name in the community was attached to the request. With such a united backing, a bill was quickly drawn up, and both the House and the Senate passed it with substantial majorities. The last step was to get the governor's signature.

Thereupon, the bill to make Winthrop a town was sent to Governor George S. Boutell,<sup>69</sup> who was then serving his second term. Boutell affixed his signature, along with that of the speaker of the House, N. P. Banks,<sup>70</sup> and Senate President, Henry Wilson,<sup>71</sup> to the document, making Winthrop a separate town.

We now turn to the religious and educational history of Pullen Point from 1739 until 1852.

The Reverend Thomas Cheever had been faithfully serving as pastor of the Rumney Marsh Meeting House, but in 1747 he asked for the congregation to accept his resignation, as he was then 89. He died December 27, 1749, aged 91, at the time the oldest Harvard graduate.

Reverend William McClenachan was then asked to preach on probation. Proving satisfactory, he was given the position permanently, and continued to preach at the meeting house until 1754, when he left this section.

69. Boutell was the youngest governor to hold office.

70. Banks became famous as a Civil War hero. His statue stands on the State House grounds.

71. Henry Wilson became Vice-President in 1873

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At the May, 1746 town meeting it was voted to raise ten pounds for education at the "rocks" and at Pullen Point. Education in this period was regular in instruction but shifting in location, for we read of a few weeks of school at Rumney Marsh, then at Winnisimmet, and finally at Pullen Point, with a total of fifty-two weeks in all.

It is of interest to note in passing that a ladies' school was planned for Pullen Point in 1750 with Mrs. Ann Elliot the teacher. The school had to be given up because no one would give Mrs. Elliot lodging, but she received her nine pounds salary for the three months nevertheless.<sup>72</sup>

Samuel Livermore was then elected to be the man teacher, receiving six pounds and board for three months' teaching. He resigned to enter Princeton College. We find that in 1780 he was a member of the Continental Congress, and twenty years later Samuel Livermore was the United States Senator from New Hampshire.

There was great activity at Point Shirley in the spring and summer of 1755. The sounds of hammers and saws could be heard for some distance around, and gradually an imposing edifice, the first of its kind in what is now Winthrop, was lifted in the air. This building was the Point Shirley Meeting House. Working on the building of the church at this time was a young man whose name was Floyd. Young Floyd was seriously injured in

72. Chelsea Selectmen's Records, Vol I., P. II.

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<sup>78</sup> Chelsea Selectman's Records, Vol. I., p. II.



an accident at the meeting house in the month of August 1755, and this fact was duly reported to the editor of the Boston News-Letter. It is believed that young Floyd recovered, but no record other than the item in the News-Letter has been discovered.

A month before at the Rumney Marsh Meeting House, three young men were nominated for the position of pastor of the church, Aaron Putnam, Mr. Vines and Mather Byles, Junior. We have not been able to find, as yet, just what connections were made between the Point Shirley and Rumney Marsh meeting houses, but we do know that Mather Byles, the young candidate, preached November 23, 1855, at Point Shirley.<sup>73</sup>

His subject was a timely one. The greatest earthquake New England has ever known had swept down the countryside on the eighteenth of November, throwing the bricks from hundreds of Boston chimneys into the streets of our capital city. The inhabitants were truly frightened, and Byles made the most of his opportunity to preach about the power of the Lord.<sup>74</sup>

We cannot say what eventually happened to the Point Shirley Meeting House. Pelham's map of the harbor shows it still on the hill in 1776, while the American Pilot, published in 1817, gives us a charming picture of the church itself, as

73. A copy of Byles' manuscript is still preserved in the Boston Public Library.

74. Rev. Ralph M. Harper preached on the Byles sermon in 1933.





a landmark for the mariner. Channing Howard says that Ensign Tewksbury told him years ago that some of the buildings still standing at the Point were built with beams from the 1755 church. Perhaps some time we shall learn more of this early Point Shirley Meeting-house.

Education and religion now made great strides forward. We recall the 23 scholars who were taught in the old Bill House in 1779. In 1805, the Town of Chelsea built a school house of moderate dimensions on land donated by John Sargent Tewksbury. This seat of learning was located where the post office stands today.

Another school building was erected at Point Shirley in 1834. Before this building was erected John Sale taught at Point Shirley in a private residence, believed to be what was later the William Tewksbury house. As a child, Mrs. Mollie Lugee played in the old school house. The reader should not confuse this 1834 building with the later edifice of 1856.

In 1818 the Methodist Episcopal church was organized with Fred W. A. S. Brown, who later purchased land at the Point, as one of the founders. It was customary to hold the services in the 1805 school building until in 1834, when a church was erected. This church was remodelled during the Civil War, and is still standing on Winthrop street. It is known as Durham's Block.

The residents of Pullen Point who joined the new church were excused from paying their share of the tax for the

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The residents of Bullen Point who joined the new  
church were excused from paying their share of the tax for the



minister who came from Chelsea.

Many of the leading townsmen of the period just before the incorporation of Winthrop have left us interesting bits of information. Mr. Louis Cobb, whose grandfather, Lucius Floyd, was a leading citizen, has allowed the writer to read several historical manuscripts written by Mr. Floyd.

In the carefully-worded sentences of this early Winthrop mariner-statesman we find much to help us form a picture of the town just prior to its incorporation. Lucius Floyd went to school in the building erected on the site of the present Post Office. Let us read what he had to say of conditions in 1851:

"The school house where I was educated stood near the site of the present town hall, a building 20 x 25, with seats and desks made of two-inch plank that extended the entire length of the room, so the scholars tumbled rather than walked to their places. We commenced at the same place each term, its close finding us a little advanced. Our experience was like that of a frog jumping from a well; - progressing three feet in the daytime and falling back two feet at night.

"A stove, where big, 2-foot logs of wood are burned occupied the center of the room, the older boys taking turns building the fires and sweeping. When water was wanted, a boy was sent to an old well belonging to Samuel Belcher, and on his return, equipped with the sparkling beverage and a rusty dipper went around the room dispensing it much as they serve the sewer.

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was sent to an old well belonging to Samuel Belcher, and on his  
return, equipped with the sparkling beverage and a trusty dipper  
went around the room dispensing it much as they serve the beer



diggers of today".

"What would we have thought of the school rooms of the present, with their marble drinking fountains, beautiful pictures, heating apparatus, and other modern luxuries?"

And so, we learn of the Winthrop schools of over two generations ago. It has been 30 years since Lucius Floyd wrote the above words, and there have been many additional improvements in the past generation.

Winthrop was such a small area that the Bostonians came to refer to it as the "Little Republic". Never before in the history of the Commonwealth had such a small community become a municipality. And so, the second part of the history of Pullen Point ended, with the Town of Winthrop a fact.

The school committee three years earlier: Henry B. Fay, who had filed the school's first report of the year before; George Washington Teakbury, and David Floyd. Four men were elected on the highway surveyors committee: David Floyd; Charles S. Teakbury, Thomas S. Teakbury, and George Washington Teakbury.

John William Teakbury made plans (about 1860) to move nearer the seat of the local government, and began the construction of a house which is now the Colonial Inn. Completed in 1863, the house was then surrounded by silver poplar.

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PART III, 1852 - 1873

The Reverend Mr. Farnsworth of North Chelsea was invited to speak at the first town meeting of Winthrop, April 7, 1852. He opened the assembly with prayer and then spoke to the townspeople, congratulating them on their success in local government. He said that he hoped Winthrop would still be friendly toward the town now called Revere, and closed by advising everyone to let his neighbor speak and vote as he saw fit.

Town officers were then elected. The three families of Winthrop, the Belchers, Tewksburys, and Floyds, were represented. Warren Belcher, in the results was elected town clerk. The three selectmen were David Belcher, Hiram Plummer, and John William Tewksbury.<sup>75</sup> Edward Floyd was made the treasurer. For the school committee three were chosen: Henry H. Fay, who had fled the Minot's Light storm of the year before; George Washington Tewksbury; and David Floyd. Four men were elected on the highway surveyors committee: David Floyd; Charles S. Tewksbury, Thomas S. Tewksbury, and George Washington Tewksbury.

John Williams Tewksbury made plans (about 1852) to move nearer the seat of the local government, and began the construction of a house which is now the Colonial Inn. Completed in 1853, the house was soon surrounded by silver poplar

75. John W. Tewksbury was the grandfather of Miss Amanda Floyd of Main Street.

PART III, 1852 - 1873

The Reverend Mr. Fairweather of North Chatham was invited to speak at the first town meeting of Winthrop, April 4, 1852. He opened the assembly with prayer and then spoke to the townspeople, congratulating them on their success in local government. He said that he hoped Winthrop would still be friendly toward the town now called Revere, and closed by advising every one to let his neighbor speak and vote as he saw fit.

Town officers were then elected. The three families of Winthrop, the Belchers, Tewksburys, and Floyds, were represented. Warren Belcher, in the results was elected town clerk. The three selectmen were David Belcher, Elisha Plummer, and John William Tewksbury.<sup>75</sup> Edward Floyd was made the treasurer. For the school committee three were chosen: Henry R. Fay, who had filed the minute's light stone of the year before; George Washington Tewksbury, and David Floyd. Four men were elected on the highway surveyors committee: David Floyd; Charles S. Tewksbury, Thomas S. Tewksbury, and George Washington Tewksbury.

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<sup>75</sup> John W. Tewksbury was the grandfather of Miss Amanda Floyd of Main Street.



trees, some of which still stand. The house and barn have been greatly changed since the days of the builder, but the old residence now located at the corner of Crystal Cove Avenue and Shirley Street can be identified by the swinging sign and the great cannon in the yard.<sup>76</sup> Charles P. Flagg, prominent hotel operator, began an establishment here in the early eighties.

About the time J. W. Tewksbury moved into his snug new house, a gifted artist by the name of Thomas Kelah Wharton<sup>77</sup> was visiting Boston from New Orleans. One day he went to Nahant and sketched the surrounding shore line. His sketch of Great Head is perhaps the first view made of the ocean side of the promontory. The copper works at Point Shirley are in full blast in this picture of November 1, 1853, and Deer Island Hospital, built the year before, completes the scene.

In 1853 H. B. Tewksbury constructed the first sidewalk in Winthrop on Main Street, laying a strip 167 feet long and five feet wide. Six elm trees were planted along the outer edge.

The first omnibus service to Boston was started in 1848 by Albert Richardson who made four trips a day from Winthrop to Scollay Square. He rested his horses at Safford's Periodical Shop in Maverick Square, East Boston. It would probably interest and amaze Richardson had he been able to make

76. The Colonial Inn is the oldest building in the Winthrop Beach section of town.

77. An interesting sketch book of pictures taken around Boston by Wharton is in the New York Public Library.

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new house, a gifted artist by the name of Thomas Kelsh Watson<sup>77</sup> was visiting Boston from New Orleans. One day he went to Winton and sketched the surrounding shore line. His sketch of Great Head is perhaps the first view made of the ocean side of the promontory. The copper works at Point Shirley are in full blast in this picture of November 1, 1833, and West Island Hospital, built the year before, completes the scene. In 1833 H. B. Tewksbury constructed the first sidewalk in Winton on Main Street, laying a strip 167 feet long and five feet wide. Six elm trees were planted along the outer edge.

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the trip from Maverick Square to Scollay Square in the nine minutes required today by the train through the tunnel. The fare charged by Richardson was twenty-five cents a trip, or five tickets for a dollar between Point Shirley and Boston. From Winthrop Center to Boston the price was fifteen cents, or eight trips for a dollar. Richardson made an agreement to carry the priests who performed the service in the Roman Catholic Church at the Point every week.

Superintendent Moriarty at Deer Island Hospital was another who gave his business to Richardson and the United States mail was also carried by the omnibus.

In the year 1854, George Turnbull built a fine house on what was then known as Snake Hill. He noticed a large stone, with deep holes evidently made by the Indians while pounding maize, and had the rock removed to the corner of Pauline and Pleasant Streets. The rock can still be seen at this location. Great collections of clam shells were found here when Pleasant Street was constructed. Undoubtedly, the Indians spent many happy hours in the vicinity pounding maize and enjoying their clam bakes.

Late in the fall of 1855, the weather became unusually stormy, with every weekend a severe storm descending on the little community. This continued for almost five months.

An event took place at 8 a.m. on Sunday, January 13, 1856<sup>78</sup> which is still talked about by a few of the oldest

78. Boston Post, January 14, 1856.

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Superintendent Mortimer at Deer Island Hospital was

another who gave his business to Richardson and the United States mail was also carried by the omnibus.

In the year 1854, George Turnbull built a fine house on what was then known as Eagle Hill. He noticed a large stone with deep holes evidently made by the Indians while pounding maize, and had the rock removed to the corner of Franklin and Pleasant Streets. The rock can still be seen at this location. Great collections of clam shells were found here when Pleasant Street was excavated. Undoubtedly, the Indians spent many happy hours in the vicinity pounding maize and enjoying their clam bakes.

Late in the fall of 1855, the weather became unusually stormy, with every week a severe storm descending on the little community. This continued for almost five months. An event took place at 8 a.m. on Sunday, January 13, 1858<sup>78</sup> which is still talked about by a few of the oldest

78. Boston Post, January 14, 1858.



inhabitants. On Saturday night the people of Winthrop noticed that the wind was coming up and that a northeast storm was coming. By midnight six inches of snow had fallen, but when dawn came it had turned into rain. With the wind at gale intensity, many ships at sea were in peril. A serious storm had developed. Before daylight the schooner "Lewis" under Captain Cromwell had smashed to pieces on Shag Rocks, five miles from Winthrop with all on board drowned.<sup>79</sup> At eight o'clock the "Irene" of 1188 tons, under Captain Williams, crashed on Winthrop Bar. The crew cut the masts away, and she slid across the bar, hitting the beach between Great Head and the Copper Works at Point Shirley. A large part of her cargo was strewn up and down the beach, and thousands of spools of thread were picked up as the tide receded. The "Irene" carried, among other things 177 tons of salt, 15 crates of earthenware, and 30 hogshead of soda.<sup>80</sup> By noon the sailors measured more than ten feet of water in her hold, and it was feared she was doomed.

Lying stern on, the "Irene" presented a tragic sight to the hundreds of people who journeyed to Winthrop to view her. The next day when the wind diminished, the waves subsided enough for two sloops to run in at high tide and load on her cargo. Tuesday morning the sloops, the "Noddle" and the "Sampson", with full cargoes left for Boston. Gradually the cargo was removed from between the "Irene's" decks so that the ship, considerably

79. Boston Herald, January 15, 1856.

80. Boston Advertiser, January 15, 1856.

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79. Boston Herald, January 15, 1858.  
80. Boston Advertiser, January 15, 1858.



lightened, was pulled off Point Shirley Beach on Sunday morning January 20, 1856. The steamer, S. A. Stevens, towed her to Boston with the help of the "Neptune".

The "Irene" had been built in Essex, Connecticut, in 1851. A year after she was freed from the sands of Point Shirley, the "Irene" ran aground on Long Island, New York, and was a total wreck. But there were many residents over in Winthrop who remembered her for a generation, as they were still using thread from her cargo and eating from dishes gathered from the crates strewn along the shore by the gale of January, 1856. Some idea of the ferocity of that particular storm may be gathered when we read that the buoys guarding vessels from Graves Ledge and Harding's Ledge were both washed away, while the Lightship anchored off Minot's Ledge was unable to flash her customary warning signals.<sup>81</sup>

The period of rapid development in the history of Winthrop was at hand. The railroad was seriously considered, our country was torn by strife, and religion gained strength. But the town was still a village of farmers and sailors either tilling the fields or cruising the sea.

Two old customs of this period which have been forgotten by the inhabitants of Winthrop are the election day shoot and the chirivarees honoring newly married couples.

81. The new Minot's Light was not built until 1860.

lightened, was pulled off Point Shirley Beach on Sunday morning January 30, 1853. The steamer, S. A. Stevens, towed her to Boston with the help of the "Hesperus".

The "Irene" had been built in Essex, Connecticut, in 1851. A year after she was fired from the sands of Point Shirley, the "Irene" ran aground on Long Island, New York, and was a total wreck. But there were many residents over in Winthrop who remembered her for a generation, as they were still using timber from her cargo and eating from fishes gathered from the crates strewn along the shore by the tide of January, 1853.

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The period of rapid development in the history of Winthrop was at hand. The railroad was seriously considered, but country was torn by strife and religion gained strength. But the town was still a village of farmers and sailors either till- ing the fields or cruising the sea.

Two old customs of this period which have been forgotten by the inhabitants of Winthrop are the election day shoot and the cativates honoring newly married couples.

81. The new Winthrop light was not built until 1860.



Hundreds of robins, swallows, and blackbirds lived in the open and wooded portions of Winthrop eighty years ago. When the Election Day of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company came along the Winthrop men enjoyed the holiday along with the Bostonians. The drum head election was always held in May, and the Winthrop men oiled their guns for the holiday accompanying it. At dawn they would start out on their bird-hunt from which there would be no let-up until five o'clock in the afternoon. When the husbands came home with whatever birds they had been successful in killing, their worthy spouses presented each with a fine Election Day cake.

As soon as a happy couple announced their engagement, plans were made for the celebration of the wedding. After the marriage was solemnized the hilarity began. Almost every boy and man was included in the group, and fish-horns, sleigh bells, policemen's whistles, rattles, dishpans, and milk cans filled with stones were used to produce the proper amount of noise. When all was in readiness, the signal was given by the firing of guns, and the march to the home of the newly wedded couple began. After a terrific serenade, the visitors would demand entrance. They were always invited inside by the bride and groom, and after congratulations were given, a feast was held. Winthrop's last chirivaree took place years ago.

Winthrop has been and still is the home of many sea captains. Captain Lucius Floyd of the Malvena kept a record



hundreds of robes, swallows, and dish-tins lined

in the room and would contain of themselves about twenty

when the election day of the American and honor his at last

coming time along the line of men enjoyed the narrow band

and the hostess. The drum head election was always held

in the, and the first men called their own for the meeting

convening in. I don't know what state was on their mind

most true which there would be no better until they looked in

the election. What the number of the vote which returned in this

time had been successful in killing, really very poor, and

ended with a fine election day.

As soon as a party people announced their intentions,

they were made for the election of the day. After the

the day was announced the day was held. Almost every day

and they were included in the group, and the house, which held

police and whistles, whistles, whistles, and with some little

with some were used to produce the proper amount of noise.

When all was in readiness, the signal was given by the firing

of guns, and the march to the line of the newly elected house

begin. After a fairly serious, the visitors were down

enough. They were always invited to the house and

room, and after some conversation were given a feast was held.

After the last conference took place for the day.

After the day was over and still in the room of the house

continued. Certain things they of the house have a record



of the various vessels and ships hailing from Winthrop in the year 1860.<sup>82</sup>

The vessels were usually put up for the winter near the Gibbons Elm.<sup>83</sup> In some winters the harbor froze over solidly and the residents could skate or sleigh out over the ice to the islands. The winter of 1844 a channel had to be cut through the ice for nine miles so that the Cunarder Brittania could sail on schedule. The cold spell of 1857 imprisoned the East Boston ferry boat in the ice just off the Boston slip, and several Winthrop men were among the great throng which drew the vessel along the ice to its pier.<sup>84</sup>

We do not realize the great business done in gravel and ballast by the sailors and captains of Winthrop up to seventy-five years ago. At one time twenty vessels have been ashore at Winthrop loading gravel and ballast. Some of our earlier residents tell us that before the gravel boats removed the sand from that vicinity, it was possible for the cows to walk over to Snake Island at low tide and graze there.<sup>85</sup>

The clouds of war which had been gathering on the horizon for many years finally broke on April 12, 1861, with the firing on Fort Sumter. This war made a boom for the Point

82. The list of ships for 1860 includes the Ant, Hershel, Marion, Quickstep, and the Irene.

83. The Gibbons Elm site is where Thornton Station stands today.

84. Ballou's Pictorial, February 28, 1857.

85. The early charts, however indicate a mud bottom as early as 1700.

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84. Historical Sketches, February 28, 1857.  
85. The early charts, however, indicate a mud bottom as early  
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Shirley Copper Works. Many of the customs connected with these days of strife are remembered by our older residents. The great furnaces were shut down one day in fourteen for overhauling and the venders from Boston would make the most of the holiday. Covering the long and difficult journey through East Boston and Winthrop to reach the Point, they would sell their merchandise along the highway on the way to the Copper Works.

Two dealers of the period are still remembered, Mrs. Croak and Benjamin Cowden. Mrs. Croak, who drove a great covered wagon with the dexterity of a man, would load her team with crockery, pots, and pans, and the noise made by the rattle of the dishes and pans would announce her coming when her team was but a speck in the distance. Many still recall her admonitions to her nag, "Git ap, old Fan," and tell us that Mrs. Croak's voice could not be distinguished from that of a man. The writer trusts that it will not hurt her memory to say that Mrs. Croak appeared in Winthrop at various times while the victim of overindulgence in stimulating beverages.<sup>86</sup>

Cowdin was the butcher, and sold not only on shut-down day at the copper works, but drove over the bridge every week-end, as well. Another gentleman, who somehow was able to avoid the total abstinence zone around the residence of John Williams Tewksbury, was old man "Mackin", who appeared at the Point with a barrel on his team. The barrel had a faucet in

86. Mrs. Croak died of a heart attack in 1878.

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88. Mrs. Crook died of a heart attack in 1878.



back, and when the barrel reached the copper works the faucet saw plenty of action.

After the new town hall was built in 1856, the Methodist Church members agreed to meet there instead of in their own edifice. Winthrop was growing fast in this period, now having 90 houses, and the old church was no longer large enough. But the members still increased at a rapid rate, and so they decided to enlarge the church and move back into it. After alterations were completed the Methodists again met in their own meeting house.

Roman Catholic services were still being held at the Point, in the little church near the corner of Triton Avenue and Triton Pathway, with Father Fitton making the long trip from East Boston every Sunday, rain or shine.

Long and Johnson's general store at Point Shirley was located near the site of the present Catholic Church. Captain William Tewksbury, the greatest lifesaver that Winthrop has ever known, had a barn here in which he kept his horses. He was accustomed to milk his cows on his Deer Island farm, cross the treacherous Shirley Gut with the milk, and then leave his boat on the beach in the care of his son, Abigail. His next duty was to harness his team and take it back to the Gut, where the load of milk was transferred to the wagon. His customers were located all over Winthrop, some even living in East Boston.

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Boston.



When Captain Tewksbury, the lifesaver, died in 1856, his will divided the property among his children. The Massachusetts Humane Society had given him a fine medal for saving the lives of seven men in 1817, and it became a cherished possession. Martin Wall Tewksbury, his sixth child, received the medal, and arranged that on his own death it should pass to his son, Martin Granville Tewksbury, born in 1843. Martin Granville Tewksbury, married Mary Sinclair Bean in 1871, and he died in 1891, with his wife passing away in 1910. Their daughter Florence inherited the medal, later marrying Alvah Crosby.

Captain William Tewksbury's son Abigiah, grew to be an outstanding personality in East Boston. He often visited the scenes of his childhood at Point Shirley, and his friends could recognize him a mile away, his long white beard waving in the wind as his team rapidly sped over the road from old Attaway's Gate to the Point. During his visit to Winthrop he often stopped at the home of his cousin, John Williams Tewksbury, who had moved to Great Head in 1853. <sup>87</sup>

The citizens of Winthrop realized about this time that if they were to make the town an active community they would have to furnish better transportation. A railroad from East Boston to Winthrop was proposed, and in 1861 the Massachusetts Legislature accepted the chartering of the Winthrop Railroad

87. Abigiah Tewksbury invented a lifeboat in 1860 which was universally used.





Company. They passed an act March 22, 1861, allowing a capitalization of \$100,000. divided into \$50. shares. Two years were given for the establishment of the road, but in 1863 an additional two years had to be allotted. Since the officers of the company still refrained from beginning operations, in spite of the additional time, another two-year extension was made in 1865.

In the meantime, David Matthews continued to operate his omnibus to Boston, rain or shine, snow or sleet. Only the great storm prevented him from making his three regular daily trips. The first start for Boston was made from Point Shirley at 6:45 a. m., with the omnibus reaching Magee's Corner at quarter past seven. Here the passengers from the Centre and the Highlands had congregated, and after waiting a minute or two for late arrivals the great stage started on its long trip to the Suffolk Railroad House in Maverick Square, arriving at its East Boston location at 8:30.

From Maverick Square, the shoppers and business men would board the ferry, which let them off at the foot of Hanover Street in Boston. The Boston shopping district of Civil War days was located on Hanover Street, and many tales have come down to this generation of the fine dresses and hats purchased at Mr. Blaickie's Shop in Hanover Street, Boston.

Two other trips were made from Point Shirley every day. One left Pullen Point at 11:30 a.m., while the final day's

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The other trips were made from Point Shirley every  
day. One left Point Shirley at 11:30 a. m., while the final day's



exodus began from Magee's Corner at 5:15 p. m.

Elijah W. Tewksbury and Leonard O. Tewksbury purchased the omnibus business from Mr. Matthews in 1864.

Many stories of interest have been told about residents of Winthrop in their younger days. Winthrop's greatest soldier, William Francis Bartlett, who for spark and action should be known as New England's greatest Civil War hero,<sup>88</sup> had been privately tutored while in Winthrop. One day he was coasting down the hill near the schoolhouse, when he noticed a huge drift in front of the school. Unable to resist the temptation, he coasted down the side of the drift right into the schoolroom. When the sled scraped to a stop beside the teacher's desk, Bartlett stood up, removing his hat. Apologizing very politely, he left the room. The pupils never forgot the incident.

Others to enlist in the Civil War were mentioned in the Town Report for 1863. They include Leander Hicks, Oliver Kelly, Edward Dyer, Henry Reed, Charles Hicks, Daniel Niel, Robert Walker, George Matthews, C. W. Hall, James A. Bryant, Edward March, John Hodgson, Henry King, Charles Danick, William Lewis, Charles Wood, William Holden, and James McDonald.

When the Civil War began, the Winthrop voters helped to elect John Albion Andrew as governor of Massachusetts. Andrew had long been known as an antislavery man, and as a leading member of the Republican party was the logical man in this great

88. Major General William Francis Bartlett, (No author) 1905.





struggle, while Theodore Parker, Horace Mann, and Ellis Loring died without seeing the country reunited in freedom, Andrew and others lived to see the consumation of their dreams in a reunited nation.

Because of the untiring efforts of Channing Howard and others a fine Civil War monument was eventually erected in the Civic Center. Those who fell have made the place where they sleep hallowed ground forever; those who returned had their reward in knowing that they assisted in the accomplishment of that for which they fought.

Winthrop's war expenses mounted rapidly until in 1863 they totalled \$3,559.94.<sup>89</sup> The Winthrop farmers and sailors in many cases hired substitutes to fight for them. The bounty men, as they were called, were quartered on Money Bluff, Deer Island, until they were needed for substitution.

The story of George Smith is a typical one of this period. An employee of the Revere Copper Company, he hired a substitute to fight for him. Naturally, interested in the subsequent story of his personal representative, he followed the news of the regiment. A few weeks later he received the word that his man had been killed in the very first battle.<sup>90</sup>

Winthrop now became the scene for experimentation in new combat weapons. The Algar Foundry in South Boston was

89. Winthrop Town Reports, 1863.

90. Interview with Wallace Wyman.

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Winthrop's war expenses mounted rapidly until in 1863 they totalled \$2,528.84.<sup>89</sup> The Winthrop lawyers and sailors in many cases hired substitutes to fight for them. The bounty men, as they were called, were quartered on Navy Island, West Island, until they were needed for substitution.

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89. Winthrop Town Reports, 1863.  
90. Interview with Wallace Wyman.



turning out scores of new cannons, which they carried to Winthrop to be tested. A huge target was placed on Grovers Cliff and day after day the men would fire at the wooden uprights. Over 70 years have passed since the last cannon echoed its warning up and down the shores of Winthrop, but every now and then cannon balls are picked up on Grover's Cliff, reminders of the days when this country was torn between two opposing forces.

One night in April, 1865, young Wallace Wyman was in the general store at the Point when important news was flashed down from the city. It was the welcome message that Lee had surrendered and the great war was over. Winthrop celebrated with the other towns and cities that night.

When Winthrop's hero, William Francis Bartlett, returned from the war he drove a fine little pony back and forth from Boston. Passing through East Boston, he would sometimes be subjected to jeers, so he decided to take care of them in his own way. One day without a word he jerked the reins of the pony so that the animal started straight for the boys, who ran for shelter. He was never bothered again.<sup>91</sup>

A proud occasion for the town took place a few months after Bartlett's return when Governor Andrew visited the Winthrop Town Hall.<sup>92</sup> Before a large gathering, Andrew presented

91. Interview with George Robie of Orient Heights.

92. Interview with Porter Tewksbury

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One night in April, 1895, young Wallace Wyman was in the general store at the Point when important news was flashed down from the city. It was the welcome message that the war had terminated and the great war was over. Winthrop celebrated with the other towns and cities that night.

When Winthrop's hero, William Francis Bartlett,

returned from the war he drove a fine little pony back and forth from Boston. Passing through East Boston, he would sometimes be subjected to jeers, so he decided to take care of them in his own way. One day without a word he jerked the reins of the pony so that the animal started straight for the boys, who ran for shelter. He was never bothered again.<sup>81</sup>

A proud occasion for the town took place a few months after Bartlett's return when Governor Andrew visited the Winthrop Town Hall.<sup>82</sup> Before a large gathering, Andrew greeted

81. Interview with George Noble of Orient Heights.  
82. Interview with Porter Townsend.



Bartlett with a sword of the finest steel. Porter Tewksbury was present at the time, and noticed that Andrew, demonstrating the quality of the weapon, bent it almost double, until young Porter thought that it would snap in two. Nothing happened, however, and the sword was handed to General Bartlett, who received the weapon in true military style.

At 3:30 a.m., January 16, 1867,<sup>93</sup> the first flakes of what was to become the greatest snowstorm of the generation fell in Winthrop. Omnibusses ran to East Boston as usual that morning, but by late afternoon had become hopelessly trapped by the great drifts. The horses finally had to be cut loose and led back to the barns. Those Winthrop residents who were thus marooned in Boston or East Boston were forced to bargain for shelter for the night, as similar conditions existed in all the Boston suburbs. Hotel rooms were at a premium, and thousands gathered at the railroad stations where they spent the long night as best they could. By midnight 20 inches of snow had fallen on the level, while the drifts had piled up ten feet high in places. The wind from the northeast increased to a gale force. The next day people in Winthrop went down to the shore, where the great waves were hurling themselves across the shale. Although it was impossible to see any distance into the harbor, some believed that they heard the sound of a gun from a ship in trouble.

93. This storm is usually known as the "Great Snow of '67".

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At 3:30 a.m., January 18, 1897,<sup>82</sup> the first flakes of what was to become the greatest snowstorm of the generation fell in Winthrop. Ambassadors ran to East Boston as usual that morning, but by late afternoon had become hopelessly trapped by the great drifts. The horses finally had to be cut loose and led back to the barns. Those Winthrop residents who were thus entrapped in Boston or East Boston were forced to bargain for shelter for the night, as similar conditions existed in all the Boston suburbs. Hotel rooms were at a premium, and thousands gathered at the railroad stations where they spent the long night as best they could. By midnight 30 inches of snow had fallen on the level, while the drifts had piled up ten feet high in places. The wind from the northeast increased to a gale force. The next day people in Winthrop went down to the shore, where the great waves were hurling themselves across the shoals. Although it was impossible to see any distance into the harbor, some believed that they heard the sound of a gun from a ship in trouble.

<sup>82</sup> This storm is usually known as the "Great Snow of 1897".



Word had come up to Boston from Hull that there was a vessel in distress called the Julia Anna. During a clearing in the storm she had been seen anchored close to Greater Brewster Island, about three and a half miles from Winthrop. By afternoon wreckage from the ship started to come ashore in Winthrop and Point Shirley, and as no life boat came ashore it was believed that all had perished. The snow continued to fall all the next day.

The fate of the men on the Julia Anna is of interest as not one of them was drowned. The ship stayed together long enough for the captain to launch his lifeboat and row across to Boston Light, from which station they were safely brought ashore the next day.

The Winthrop snow shovellers were now working overtime to open up the roads for the omnibus, and by the end of the week the vehicle was again flying over the long route from East Boston to Point Shirley. In this period the snow shovellers were paid a shilling an hour, a shilling being approximately 16 and 2/3 cents.<sup>94</sup>

Dr. Walker, the Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum in Boston, was eager to establish a new hospital in Winthrop. Many on the committee for the new hospital were against locating on what they regarded as the wastelands of Winthrop Highlands, and Dr. Walker had a hard fight on his hands to win over the

94. Winthrop Town Reports, 1868

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The Wintthrop snow shovellers were now working overtime to open up the roads for the omnibuses, and by the end of the week the vehicles were again flying over the long route from East Boston to Point Shirley. In this period the snow shovellers were paid a shilling an hour, a shilling being approximately 10 and 2/3 cents. 84

Dr. Walker, the Superintendent of the Lennett asylum in Boston, was eager to establish a new hospital in Wintthrop. Many on the committee for the new hospital were against locating on what they regarded as the wastelands of Wintthrop Necklands, and Dr. Walker had a hard fight on his hands to win over the



Council members so that they would make the journey down to the location.

Not until a dinner at Taft's Hotel was suggested, together with a suitable collation, did the City Fathers agree to make the long trip to the Highlands. Several of the objectors did not go, however, and Dr. Walker was never able to win them over. The City Council, together with the members of the Special Committee on the Lunatic Asylum visited Taft's Inn and the Highlands location in the fall of 1868. Their expenses for carriages amounted to \$135, while the collation itself cost \$1,009.35.<sup>95</sup>

When Dr. Walker spoke of the fine location at Winthrop Highlands, several other doctors, including Doctors Tyler, Choate, Stedman, Butler, Nichols and Jones angered him by their refusal to listen to his plans. Dr. Walker was so definitely convinced of the wonderful advantages of the location that he decided to have some views made from the Highlands Hill. Securing a photographer, he made a special trip to Winthrop and walked up to the top of the hill.<sup>96</sup>

The photographer set his tripod down and faced his camera lens toward the south. He then swung a little to the eastward to take in the full sweep of the beach. John Flanagan's house and barn, John W. Tewksbury's residence, Green Hill,

95. This information given me by Mrs. Underhill

96. The statement that Brady made the pictures cannot be proved

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When Dr. Walker spoke of the fine location at Whitson Highlands, several other doctors, including Doctors Taylor, Chase, Steadman, Butler, Nichols and Jones, urged him by their refusal to listen to his plans. Dr. Walker was so definitely convinced of the wonderful advantages of the location that he decided to have some views made from the Highlands Hill. Securing a photographer, he made a special trip to Whitson and walking up to the top of the hill. 93

The photographer set his tripod down and faced his camera lens toward the south. He then swung a little to the eastward to take in the full sweep of the beach. John Fisher's house and barn, John W. Tewksbury's residence, Green Hill

92. This information given me by Mrs. Unsworth.  
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and Deer Island Hospital were all in the range of his camera, with the hut of the Massachusetts Humane Society, of which John Flanagan was the keeper, located on the beach. Shirley Street was in the right foreground with Taft's Hotel barely showing in the distance.

The camera swung again to the west, describing an arc of approximately thirty degrees before it was focused for the second view. This time most of Point Shirley, the present River Road section of Winthrop, together with what is now the Winthrop golf course was visible. Again the camera was swung thirty degrees, this time facing the Cottage Park and Court Park section with the ancient Deane Winthrop house in the central foreground.

The photographer now faced due east. Magee's Corner with Shirley Street and Main Street and a score or more houses, with East Boston and part of Orient Heights showing in the distance, was now photographed. Thirty degrees farther to the north another picture was taken showing Breed's Hill and the old barn in Orient Heights. The final picture was taken of the former Crooked Lane, now called Belle Isle Inlet, flanked by Beachmont at the extreme right.<sup>97</sup>

When Mrs. Elihu T. Underhill was living in Boston one winter she made the acquaintance of Dr. Walker, who gave her six prints from the series of pictures taken in Winthrop.

97. It is said that Belle was Breed's divorced wife.

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The photographer now faced due east. Hedges's corner, with Shirley Street and Main Street and a score or more houses, with East Boston and part of Orient Heights showing in the distance, was now photographed. Thirty degrees farther to the north another picture was taken showing Treble's Hill and the old barn in Orient Heights. The final picture was taken of the former Crooked Lane, now called Belle Isle Lane, flanked by Beachmont at the extreme right.

When Mrs. Ellen T. Underhill was living in Boston one winter she made the acquaintance of Dr. Walker, who gave her six prints from the series of pictures taken in Winthrop.

37. It is said that Belle was Treble's divorced wife.



The next summer, 1902, she presented the pictures to Channing Howard of the Board of Trustees of the Winthrop Public Library who had them appropriately labelled and hung in the David Floyd Room of the Frost Memorial Library. The writer wonders if other pictures were not taken at the same time which gave the view toward the sea and over to Nahant, as an arc of not over 175 degrees is included in the six known views which we have today. There were over 116 dwellings in the town when the pictures were made.

In the expenses for 1866-1867 an item for \$606.78 is mentioned. A. Farrar & Company and A. Somerby were the principals included in the judgment for that amount, May 2, 1866.

Orray Augustus Taft, whose fame as an expert connoisseur in eatables had spread even to England, was now entering the most prosperous period of his life. Taft's Hotel, the meeting place of Longfellow, Holmes, and Emerson, was receiving thousands of guests weekly.

Mr. Taft made many friends in Winthrop, and among those who knew him intimately were the three Paine sisters. When the weather was pleasant Mr. Taft would send his carriage up to Main Street for the three girls, Ella, Clara, and Rose. The girls would sit up with the driver and on arriving at the Point would be met by Lilly Taft Adams, who would take the girls to see her grandfather.<sup>98</sup>

98. Paine Street, Winthrop, is named for the family.

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In the expenses for 1884-1887 an item for \$808.78 is mentioned. A. Parson & Company and A. Bonaparte were the principal- this included in the judgment for that amount, May 2, 1885. Orrey Augustus Talt, whose name is an expert connoisseur in established had spread even to England, was now entering the most prosperous period of his life. Talt's Hotel, the meeting place of Longfellow, Holmes, and Emerson, was receiving thousands of guests weekly.

Mr. Talt made many friends in Winthrop, and among those who knew him intimately were the three Paine sisters. When the weather was pleasant Mr. Talt would send his carriage up to Main Street for the three girls, Ella, Clara, and Rose. The girls would sit up with the driver and on arriving at the Point would be met by Lilly Talt Adams, who would take the girls to see her grandfather.

93. Paine Street, Winthrop, is named for the family.



The great gale of September, 1869, left a trail of destruction, causing the death of over a score of people around Boston and sinking forty ships in the harbor. A great limb was torn from the Boston Elm, at the same time, and the Coliseum in Boston was severely damaged.<sup>99</sup> In Winthrop the gale ripped a large section from the Gibbons Elm. Some said at the time that the tree was split in two, but this report cannot be verified.

The gale did considerable damage at Point Shirley. At Taft's Hotel a party of eminent gentlemen were enjoying one of the delectable dinners which Taft served when the storm struck without warning. The guests looking out over the harbor at the yachts and vessels in distress were helpless to save the drowning sailors. The wind howled; the hotel seemed to shake. Suddenly, there was a great crash, and the dining room was filled with smoke. The great chimney had fallen, breaking through the skylight and into the kitchen where Mr. Taft was preparing the next course.

Mrs. Taft rushed in from the other room to her husband. He had escaped injury, although all around him was a hopeless confusion of pans, dishes, food, and bricks. Holding a dish high in the air above the debris in the kitchen, he exclaimed in a happy voice to his wife, "The upland plover are all safe, my dear". His ruling passion, service for his guests, was triumphant in his hour of peril; his integrity as a host was safe amidst his ruined kitchen.

99. Boston Post, September 9, 1869.

The great gale of September, 1863, left a trail of destruction, causing the death of over a score of people around Boston and sinking forty ships in the harbor. A great limb was torn from the Boston Elm, at the same time, and the Coliseum in Boston was severely damaged. In Winthrop the gale ripped a large section from the Gibbons Elm. Some said at the time that the tree was split in two, but this report cannot be verified. The gale did considerable damage at Point Shirley. At Talbot Hotel a party of eminent gentlemen were enjoying one of the delectable dinners which Tait served when the storm struck without warning. The guests looking out over the harbor at the yachts and vessels in distress were helpless to save the drowning sailors. The wind howled; the hotel seemed to shake. Suddenly, there was a great crash, and the dining room was filled with smoke. The great chimney had fallen, breaking through the skylight and into the kitchen where Mr. Tait was preparing the next course. Mrs. Tait rushed in from the other room to her husband. He had escaped injury, although all around him was a hopeless confusion of pans, dishes, food, and bricks. Holding a dish high in the air above the debris in the kitchen, he exclaimed in a happy voice to his wife, "The upland plover are all safe, my dear". His willing passion, service for his guests, was triumphant in his hour of peril; his integrity as a host was safe amidst his ruined kitchen.



In April, 1869, the City of Boston asked permission to lay water pipes through the Winthrop streets to Deer Island, and a few of the residents along the way availed themselves of the opportunity of securing fresh water regularly.

The summer of 1869 was outstanding for the many treasure hunts around Boston, one of which, led by Hartley Wells, started out from Winthrop. Wells had heard about the Magnifique disaster of 1778, and decided to try to recover some of the treasure which went down with the ship. He and his brother brought to the surface several cannon balls and pieces of fine timber from the old ship, but never found any of the treasure. Many of the timbers were cut down and sold as canes from the old French battleship.<sup>100</sup>

Three projects which may have changed the town of Winthrop from a residential suburb of Boston to a town of less dignified proportions were abandoned about this time. They were the Copper Works at the Point, the Kerosene factory at Pleasant Park, and the Insane Hospital at the Highlands.

Boston was anxious to do something with its Winthrop land. Dr. Walker continued his efforts to have the Lunatic Asylum located at Winthrop Highlands, and made careful plans for the year 1869. An expensive collation was arranged for members of the City Council, and the feast was one long to be remembered.

100. Wallace Wyman has one of the canes made from the Magnifique, the wreck of which ultimately caused John Paul Jones to leave the American Navy.



In April, 1883, the City of Boston asked permission to lay water pipes through the Winthrop streets to Bear Island, and a few of the residents along the way availed themselves of the opportunity of securing fresh water regularly.

The summer of 1883 was outstanding for the many treasure hunters around Boston, one of which, led by Harlow Wells, started out from Winthrop. Wells had heard about the Waggon disaster of 1778, and decided to try to recover some of the treasure which went down with the ship. He and his brother brought to the surface several cannon balls and pieces of iron timber from the old ship, but never found any of the treasure. Many of the timbers were cut down and sold as comes from the old French battleship. 100

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The expenses were \$1205.85, including carriage fees.

Unfortunately for Dr. Walker, the six doctors who had stayed away before still held out, and the next year, another trip was made. When after careful consideration the members of the City Council decided against the Winthrop location, the property was put on the market for development. Thus the doubtful value of having an insane asylum in town was spared the citizens of Winthrop.

The next proposal which was abandoned was the copper development at Point Shirley. In 1869 the directors definitely decided to close the smelters and move operations to Canton, Massachusetts. Alexander Haggerston was sent to Point Shirley to watch over the abandoned buildings.<sup>101</sup>

Many reasons were given for the abandonment of the Point Shirley property by the Revere Copper Company. The construction of the transcontinental railroad, allowing the copper ore to be taken direct to Canton from the west, the change in methods of production, and the discovery of certain natural advantages at Canton all influenced the decision of the directors. When it is realized that no tree, shrub, or blade of grass could exist at Point Shirley while the furnaces were going, perhaps it was just as well that the works were abandoned.

The second change in Winthrop's economic history was the eventual closing of the kerosene factory. The residents of

101. Interview with Mollie Haggerston Lougee.



the expenses were \$12.85. The following charges were:

Salmon only for the day, the fish was not eaten.

After a very short stay, the fish was not eaten.

The fish was not eaten. The fish was not eaten.

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Winthrop admitted that kerosene was a necessary and useful commodity but desired that it be manufactured elsewhere. Several of the leading citizens petitioned in the Superior Court against the operation of the kerosene factory in Winthrop. Although the court decided against the oil works, the case was appealed. The Wednesday after the appeal the entire section was shaken by an explosion which occurred at the factory.<sup>102</sup>

The following month a petition against the factory, signed by most of the leading citizens of the town, was presented at the Town Hall, but the kerosene company countered with the announcement that a Dr. Charles T. Jackson had just invented a new process which took the smell from the factory. The Winthrop citizens waited patiently for several months; as time went on, however, it was generally agreed that the doctor's alleged invention had failed. Samuel Ingalls announced that the whole thing was a fraud. The directors of the kerosene company gradually came to realize that to allow the factory to stay in Winthrop was to court serious trouble. The superintendent soon left Winthrop for good, and the machinery followed him in September, 1872. The kerosene nuisance, the last of the three problems which faced Winthrop, was at an end.

Winthrop Beach was visited by a whale, deceased, late in 1871, and the occasion is still remembered by a few of the older inhabitants. The great creature, 65 feet long, was found

102. September 12, 1871.

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Winthrop Beach was visited by a whale, deceased, late in 1871, and the occasion is still remembered by a few of the older inhabitants. The great creature, 85 feet long, was found

103. September 15, 1871.



on the beach on Mr. Wyman's property, November 25, 1871.<sup>103</sup> Scientists from Boston came down to view the great mammal. Soon promoters arrived on the scene. One of them offered Mr. Wyman \$300. for the creature, and the bargain was agreed upon.

The whale, exhibited at Litchfield's Drydock in Boston the next week, had over 3000 visitors the first day. The creature was later sent to New York, but caught fire and burned while in a freightcar on the way to Albany. This was the end of the mammal which surprised our citizens 68 years ago.

Education was striding rapidly ahead during the post war period. For the year ending March 1866, the expenditures were \$1,252.47.<sup>104</sup> Miss Mary Heaton was in charge of Point Shirley, Samuel B. Wiggin was the instructor at the Grammar School, while Marie A. Gove supervised the primary classes.

By 1854, there were 48 pupils in attendance at the Winthrop schools including a dozen Tewksburys, an equal number of Belchers, and nine Floyds. A year later the young people had outgrown their quarters as the town was growing rapidly. The old school house was purchased by George Belcher and moved to a lot on Winthrop Street, and the contract for building the town hall was given to George Shaw. On the site of the old school, the town hall, with two school rooms on the ground floor, was completed in 1856.

The Methodist Church experienced trouble in 1868. Porter  
103. His property extended from Ocean Street to Irwin Street.

on the beach on Mr. Wyman's property, November 22, 1871. 103  
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M Vinton had been the preacher in 1865, while the reverend Mose-ly Dwight succeeded him in 1866.<sup>104</sup> A group of the congregation, with distinct Baptist leanings, could not accept the admonitions of Reverend Mr. Dwight, and when he was reappointed in 1867, they left the church in a body of fifty-two members and began meetings in the Town Hall. This group later split up into two denominations.

The classes in the Winthrop schools were growing. By 1867, there were 137 pupils in attendance at the three schools. Only seven other children of school age lived in Winthrop at that time, so the school committee must have done a fine job in getting the boys and girls to attend school.

Miss Judith C. Gardner, who is remembered by almost a score of Winthrop residents, was then the teacher at the Point, receiving \$307.50 for her services for the year. Miss W. C. Green and Miss S. S. Barnes ran the Primary School, while the Grammar School was in charge of Miss M. A. Smith. The members of the school committee were H. S. Soule, Lucius Floyd, and Charles S. Tewksbury.<sup>105</sup>

The next year classes of honor were formed at the Point Shirley Schod, while the Grammar School at the Centre also used the same system. Miss Gardner picked her ten best pupils at the end of the school year. First prize went to Miss Alice Long, the daughter of Mr. Long, who ran Long & Johnson's store.

104. Report of Winthrop School Committee, 1867.

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The classes in the Winthrop schools were growing. By 1887, there were 147 pupils in attendance at the three schools. Only seven other children of school age lived in Winthrop at that time, so the school committee must have done a fine job in getting the boys and girls to a good school.

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- 104. Report of Winthrop School Committee, 1887.
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She lived on Prospect Street, now Siren Street. Mary J. Caton was second place winner, while Ensign Tewksbury received the third award. Eugene Finigin and Fred Carney were the fourth and fifth prize winners.

Wallace Wyman, who helped his father lobstering in his spare time, captured the sixth prize. Daniel Carney, whose wife and daughter, Mrs. Carney and Mrs. Griffin, still live on Beacon Street, won the seventh award. Thomas Porter who later worked at Taft's Hotel, was next in line, while the ninth place holder was another unknown, Henry Clayton. William Flanagan, the son of John Flanagan, won the tenth and last place.

At the Grammar School the following ten were mentioned: First place winner was Alfred Tewksbury, whose wife, Mrs. Bessie Tewksbury, is still living. Willie Piper, who lived where Homer's chocolate factory stands today, received second. Alice W. Magee, the aunt of Horace Magee, received the third place award. Miss Amanda Floyd, who still lives in the "1842" house on Main St., was the winner of fourth place. Leonard Shouler was fifth and Abiel C. Treworgy, who later was killed at Magee's Corner, received the sixth place award. Seventh was Millard Sawyer, who lived in the old Griffin house. Granville Turnbull, who lived on Snake Hill, was eighth. Marilla Belcher, who later married Edward Freeman, received the ninth place award, while James Boylan, whose sister still lives on Pauline Street was tenth.

One lived on Prospect Street, now Silver Street. Mary L. Eaton was second place winner, while Ensign Tewksbury received the third award. Eugene Franklin and Fred Carney were the fourth and fifth prize winners.

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The first singing teacher on record in the Winthrop schools was Miss H. J. George, whose instructions to the pupils of Winthrop along musical lines netted her the sum of \$13.00 in 1868.<sup>106</sup>

We now turn to religious matters. As time widened the ecclesiastical breach between the members of the Methodist Church in Winthrop, those who had left the fold decided to organize a Baptist Church. On October 27, 1871, the First Baptist Church of Winthrop was formed with twelve constituent members. The first preacher, the Reverend F. A. Lockwood, was ordained July 10, 1872.<sup>107</sup> Ground for the church edifice was broken September 16, 1871, and the building was finished in May 1873.

The Methodist Church was steadily gaining in strength. The Reverend Charles A. Nutter, was pastor from 1869 to 1870, with Reverend W. N. Richardson pastor for the next two years. On September 14, 1870, the sod was turned for a new building. The spire of the new meeting house was erected in time to be tested by the winter winds, and the church was finished by June 1871. The dedication took place June 8, 1871, with Ira Bidwell preaching the sermon.<sup>108</sup>

Baptismal ceremonies were often held outdoors in Winthrop's history. One of these events took place June 2, 1872 at the western end of Fisher's Creek, with Reverend Mr. Richardson

106. Report of Winthrop School Committee, 1869.

107. Winthrop Sun and Visitor, March 20, 1902 (Anniversary No.)

108. Methodist Church Records, 1871.

- 108. Report of Winthrop School Committee, 1888.
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Around 1865, the Roman Catholics, at Point Shirley erected a small chapel, where Father Fitton of East Boston preached weekly. The name of Father Fitton is honored in Boston, and we are fortunate indeed to have this great patriarch connected with Winthrop history.

Winthrop's educational system now became the central thought in the minds of the citizens. Dr. Ingalls was anxious to improve the standards of the schools, and visited every room in the various buildings in the fall of 1872. Since many of the voters had criticized the teaching system, the school committee agreed that certain general ideas should be followed in the future. The regulations, however, should surprise the reader on account of their very simplicity. The teachers had to be of high moral character, and were required to be able to read and write the English language !

Dr. George B. Emerson,<sup>109</sup> the noted educator, surprised many of the dissatisfied residents by saying that in his opinion, the Winthrop schools were the best in the state. Emerson was an important personality in the educational world at this time.

The most trying need of the schools was a new building. Finally, plans were drawn for a two story edifice to be erected near Hermon Street, at an estimated cost of \$10,564. The town fathers, however, vetoed the whole measure.

109. Emerson was the first principal of the Boston High School.

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The selectmen believed that more and better roads were needed, rather than improved educational facilities and this belief led to a strange occurrence. A plan to connect Pleasant Street and Winthrop Street across the old Ingalls area was decided upon. The new street was to be named Haldemar Avenue, but the name was changed to Pauline Street. September 16, 1872, the workmen uncovered a human skeleton which experts who viewed the find judged to be the remains of a thirty-year-old Indian. Ten feet away another skull was unearthed. The soil was dry and gravelly, and this condition was claimed by several to have helped preserve the skeleton through the centuries. At the time of the find, Dr. Ingalls remarked that a similar discovery had been made in another section of the old Ingalls farm. Years later, when the Narrow Gauge Railroad tracks were being put through, the same section, several Indian skeletons in almost perfect state of preservation were discovered.<sup>110</sup>

The farmlands of Winthrop were very productive in this period of the town's history. The potato crop was superior in both yield and quality to that of any other section in Massachusetts. In 1870, the potatoes were of unusual size, several of the bushels being made up of tubers weighing from 1 1/2 to 2 pounds each. David H. Blaney gathered 440 bushels of the "poor man's fruit" from his two acre field, attributing much of his success to the seaweed fertilizer which he used. We cannot underestimate the importance of using the kelp and other sea plants

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which washed up on Winthrop's shores after a great storm. Even today along Cape Cod, the rumble of the old cart is heard as the farmer returns from the shore with a great load of seaweed, and those who wish to return to the atmosphere of old Winthrop would do well to visit the Cape after a storm.

The last day of 1870 was the occasion for a great snow-storm which prevented the coaches from getting through the streets. Reverend Mr. Dadmun, a resident of Winthrop who was marooned in Boston, hired a livery wagon. However, the team became stuck in the great snowdrifts, and Reverend Mr. Dadmun had to spend the night at the Maverick House in East Boston.

Plans for the new railroad were becoming more definite but the money for the project was not subscribed. The General Court ordered another postponement in 1869. Although Winthrop citizens bought bonds from the promoters, the majority were pursuing a cautious policy. They were agreeably surprised when loads of ties and sleepers were laid down along a route from Point Shirley to Orient Heights. The news was now made public that the railroad would be opened in 1871 and would be a horse railroad.

Trouble began, however, early in 1871. On January 28, 1871,<sup>111</sup> it was found that Shirley Street would have to be regraded and the ties near Great Head were out of line. Considerable repairs were necessary elsewhere. Another announcement was made February 11, 1871, that the road would soon be opened

111. East Boston Argus-Advocate, January 28, 1871.





from Point Shirley to Wadsworth Street.<sup>112</sup> Spring turned into summer, then fall came, but nothing happened.

Plans were abandoned for the season when a great gale swept through Winthrop November 16, 1871, covering up the tracks on Short Beach, between Winthrop and Point Shirley. Spring came and then summer. But the people were again doomed to disappointment. The cool blasts of the November winds swirling in from the ocean soon ended whatever hopes they had kept for a railroad in 1872.

It was quite a surprise for the people of Winthrop to learn of a public hearing to be held February 15, 1873, at the State House in Boston to discuss the fate of the Winthrop railroad.<sup>113</sup> The meeting was generally attended, and the General Court gave permission for the Town of Winthrop itself to subscribe to the stock of the company.

The winter passed slowly. With the first signs of spring, however, work on the tracks went ahead rapidly. April 26, 1873, the line was clear, but minor delays postponed the first run. It was announced that single fares would be 16 cents with five dollar monthly rates for regular passengers.

Trials were made on the tracks Saturday afternoon, May 3, 1873. One car was wheeled over the rails, drawn by a pair of cream white horses. It was a well-upholstered car, seating

112. East Boston Argus-Advocate, February 11, 1871.

113. February 15, 1873.





28, and all who examined it were impressed.

The great day arrived May 5, 1873, when the first horse car was scheduled to make an official run from East Boston to Winthrop. The start was made, with the cream white horses drawing the car around town at good speed. The horse car reached Point Shirley without mishap, and the trip back to East Boston began.

And thus we leave the people of Winthrop, cheering at the speeding horse car as it returns to East Boston. Since the year 1873, the population has increased twenty fold, until there are now almost 25,000 inhabitants of the town in summer with 17,000<sup>114</sup> permanent residents the year round.

We might continue the History of Winthrop up to the present time, but we believe it should close with the story of the first horse railroad. The charm and fascination of early Pullen Point departed when tracks from Boston made it easily accessible to the average person. Far better it is to stop when there were plenty of fresh-smelling meadows and uninhabited headlands.

Considering the insular character of the Winthrop peninsula, I am offering the reader the following as a final thought:

114. Population in 1935 estimated at 16,800.

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began.

And thus we leave the people of Winthrop, cheering  
at the speeding horse car as it returns to East Boston. Since  
the year 1873, the population has increased twenty fold, until  
there are now almost 25,000 inhabitants of the town in summer  
with 17,000<sup>112</sup> permanent residents the year round.

We might continue the history of Winthrop up to the  
present time, but we believe it should close with the story of  
the first horse railroad. The charm and fascination of early  
Pollen Point departed when travel from Boston made it easily  
accessible to the average person. For better it is to stop  
when there were plenty of fresh-smelling meadows and rolling  
dotted landscape.

Considering the insular character of the Winthrop  
peninsula, I am offering the reader the following as a final  
thought:

112. Population in 1935 estimated at 15,000.



Why journey again to Winthrop, with all the  
world to roam?

Perhaps it is the wave-lashed shore, the great  
rocks dashed in foam,

The seagulls gliding with outstretched wings, as  
they soar in trackless flight;

Or possibly the lighthouse gleam with its flash  
through darkest night.

The great cliff has its wondrous view, the sea its  
magic spell,

The salty lake beside the marsh, its pebbly beach  
as well,

The tidal bar, with its crescent curve, which forms  
a rocky quay,

The swirling gut, with its mighty tide, as it sweeps  
to the outer bay -

Each bit of town, each hill and cove combines in  
harmony.

That's why we go to Winthrop, to Winthrop by the sea.

Why journey again to Wintthrop, with all the  
world to roam?

Perhaps it is the wave-lashed shore, the great  
rocks dashed in foam,

The seagulls gliding with outstretched wings, as  
they soar in trackless flight;

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The tidal bar, with its crescent curve, which forms  
a rocky quay,

The swirling ebb, with its mighty tide, as it sweeps  
to the outer bay -

Each bit of town, each hill and cove combines in  
harmony.

That's why we go to Wintthrop, to Wintthrop by the sea.





